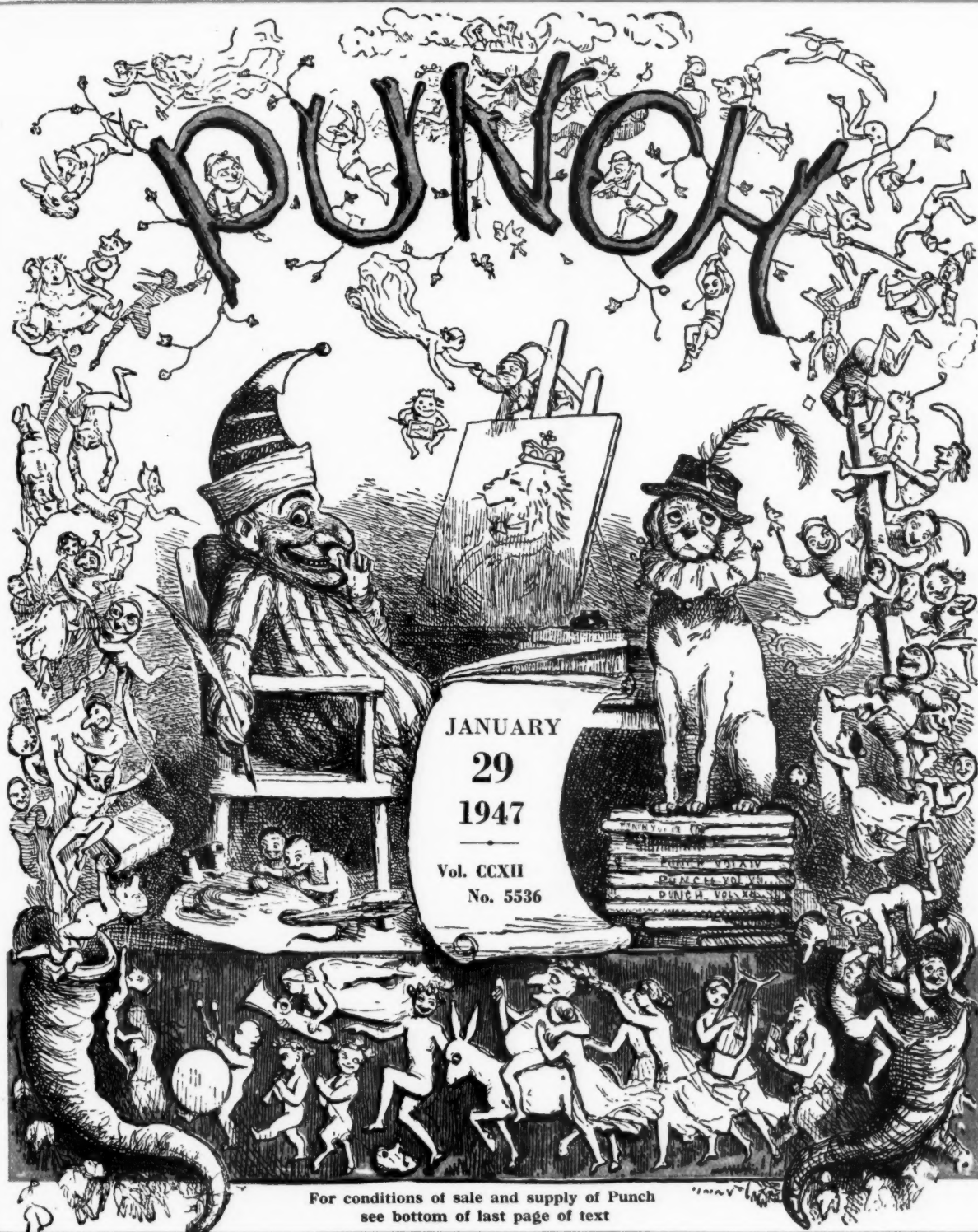


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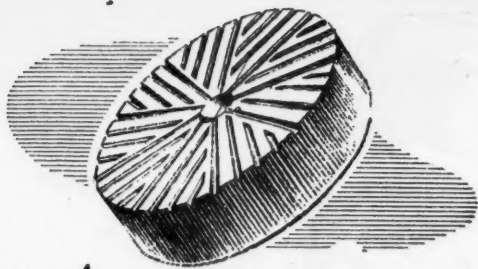


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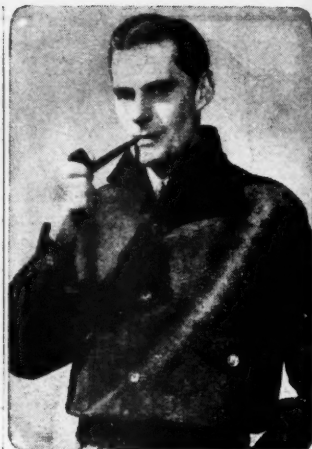
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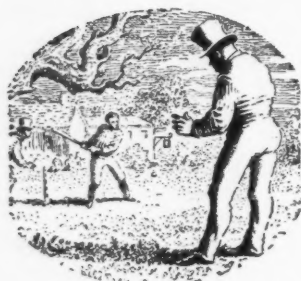
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Mr. Edward Evans, Labour member for the Lowestoft Division of East Suffolk and former Headmaster of a School for the Deaf, said recently in the House:

"Above all, while I am discussing aural aids, may I say that it is important to get the right type? This can only be done by purchase from a reliable firm whose ethical standards of sale have been approved by the National Institute for the Deaf. Many of the firms supplying these instruments in the past have done valuable work. Their standards are high, their research investigations worthy of the highest praise and they do not exploit their customers. I hope our people will be given every encouragement to continue developments and to maintain and increase their overseas connections."

It is good to hear such statements from someone who understands his subject—especially after the nonsense that has been talked by people who don't.

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C.R.C. 163

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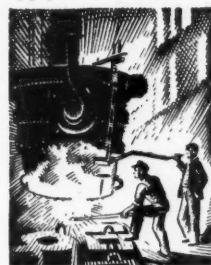
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Just honest to goodness tobacco

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# PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXII No. 5536

January 29 1947

## Charivaria

"Some people," writes a psychiatrist, "are not perturbed by their failures." Mr. Shinwell, for instance, would not worry if all his efforts ended in smoke.

"Horses with flu feel the same as we do," says a daily paper. A horse points out, however, that there is nothing in human experience like sneezing into a nosebag full of chaff.



### Straight from the Nest.

"CANADA MAY SEND MARE EGGS."

Heading in Newcastle paper.

A man who broke into a butcher's and stole a joint also took a pair of horn-rimmed spectacles. So that the joint could see him further through the week.

A newspaper, commenting on Sir Ben Smith's new and palatial regional coal headquarters at Himley, asked what use would be made of the swimming bath. Surely, to keep the coal in?

"Some meat should be cooked very slowly if it is to be made tender," says a household hint. Your butcher and the electricity company will supply the suitable cuts.

A new type of dinner-jacket has a zip-fastener by which tails are lowered if full evening-dress is necessary. For a sudden emergency chalk may be used on the tie.

"Nationalization of the railways will not mean an immediate increase of railway stock," explains a writer. For some time the overflow meeting of shareholders will continue to be held in the guard's van.

### Imbruegelio

"... the whole wide world looked just as if Old Peter Bremghel had painted it. There was the genuine Bremghel silver carpet of snow over everything."—Daily paper.

"If the whale-meat has an oily taste," advises a chef, "soak it in salt water for some hours." This seems unnecessary considering that the whale has done it for years.

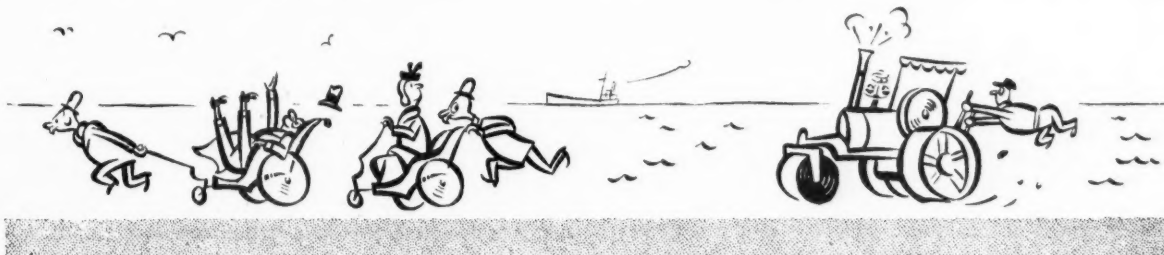
A mystic claims to be able to see into remote space without the aid of a telescope. We should like to match him with a tea-shop waitress we know.



### Dear Old England

"George Formby, the comedian, back from a tour of South Africa, denied yesterday reports that he intended settling down there. 'My wife and I always long to get back to dear old England,' said George, who will have a Swiss holiday before starting on a tour of Australia and New Zealand."—Sunday Chronicle.

A steam-roller, which got out of control on the Essex coast, plunged into the sea and was not recovered until a week later. Local anglers are said to be looking forward to record catches of flat-fish.



## The Queerest Visitor

THE queerest visitor who ever came into this office in my time was Mr. Coothwaite, and if I say that Coothwaite was not his true name, that is only because one of the letters he laid before me began "Dear Mr. Bowles," and on another was written "To Chas. Henderson, Esquire."

He laid a great many letters before me. They were curiously mixed with trade circulars, theatre programmes, and charity appeals, and I had no time to sift them carefully before he took them away. But the visiting card which he placed on the top of the pile bore the inscription "Mr. L. H. Coothwaite, M.I.C.E.," and at these initials, well-known though they are, I gazed, as always, fascinated. But not for long.

"I have come to see you," said Mr. Coothwaite in a very loud voice, "because you are the only person who can help me."

I should perhaps have felt flattered. But I did not, for I had already noticed what the story-tellers would call the strange glitter in Mr. Coothwaite's eyes.

The experienced interviewee, if I may coin a rather pretty word, has to decide at once in cases of this sort whether his visitor has mislaid a return ticket to Plymouth or has mistaken his way to Harley Street.

The former class is tiresome, but experience is a great aid. At a tavern not long ago I became involved in a long conversation with a gentleman who was on the point of securing a job at three thousand pounds a year. All that he needed to clinch the affair was a letter of recommendation from myself. There were few important posts that he had not held, and few resounding names of statesmen and generals with whom he was not personally acquainted. After about fifteen minutes I looked at my watch, said that I was late for an appointment and must go. I went. As I walked down to the street footsteps pattered behind me and a voice said "Look here, I'll make a clean breast of it. Can you lend me five shillings?" I gave him half a crown. I should have liked to know his average weekly earnings. Whatever they were, they were untaxed. But it was immediately obvious that Mr. Coothwaite was not that kind of man. There was little use in wondering how he had passed the scrutiny at the door down below, and my impulse to ring for someone and have him shown back to it was arrested partly by politeness and partly by the fact that he had pulled up a chair so close to mine that my desk seemed to belong rather more to him than it did to me. Have I said that he was a very big man? Well, he was. Dark, powerful and strong.

"I am followed about everywhere," roared Mr. Coothwaite, "day in, day out, from morning to night."

I could have wished that his words were true.

"Oh, yes," I said rather weakly. "By whom?"

"By my sisters," he said. "They run after me with sticks. They write letters to me. They lay trip-wires in the garden."

"Everyone has his own domestic troubles," were the words that instantly came into my head. But I did not use them. I felt sure that they would not meet the emergency. Mr. Coothwaite was not the sort of person to be put off by generalizations.

"Why do they do that?" I inquired.

"To take away my money," he shouted furiously, banging my desk with his fist so that the pens rattled. "And another thing," he added more quietly, "they think I have the Koh-i-noor."

"And have you?" I said.

"It was entrusted to me for a time. But only for a time, mark you. I returned it without let or hindrance. I sent it back in a green parcel the moment the deed came to an end."

Right was clearly on Mr. Coothwaite's side. I endeavoured to assume an air of thoughtfulness.

"Have you consulted a solicitor?"

He gave a hollow laugh. One of the hollowest I have ever heard. So, I fancied, must have sounded the metal gongs in the oak-woods of Dodona.

"Solicitor indeed! My solicitor aids and abets them. Look at that letter—and that." He drew from the pile an account from the Metropolitan Water Board and what seemed to be a communication from a minor official of the Board of Trade. I studied them carefully, edging my chair away as he glowered.

"How long has this persecution gone on?" I asked him after a while.

"Ever since my aunt died."

The date lacked precision. I sought a different approach.

"What would you like me to do about the matter?" I said.

"You must come down and see us."

"And the address?"

"Sydenham," he said, "on Tuesdays."

I made a note of it. I now hoped that Mr. Coothwaite would leave me. But once again Mr. Coothwaite was not that kind of man.

"I have not told you everything," he boomed. "They are putting glass in my food."

The temptation to assure him that he was looking well on it had to be pushed aside. I told him that this made the situation far more serious than I had supposed.

"I think," I said, "that you ought to speak seriously to the cook about it."

"The cook is on their side too."

His face, which was far too close to mine, looked at me with an air of indescribable menace.

"She pounds up the finger-bowls and puts them in my porridge."

"You must tell the police about it at once."

"The police!" He laughed again. He edged even closer and glared at me. "The police hide in the hedges and point at me as I go by."

Many strange things are known to happen in London's underworld. But the picture now presented to me of life in Sydenham on Tuesdays was a new and terrible one. I was anxious about Mr. Coothwaite's future. But I was still more anxious about my own. Not often, as you may guess, am I visited by any kind of inspiration. But on this occasion I happily was.

I stood up. "Tell the police," I cried in ringing tones, "if you find them doing that again, that THIS PAPER HAS ITS EYE UPON THEM."

And I clenched both my fists and put them up to my right eye.

Strangely enough it worked. His face broke into a radiant smile. He patted me on the back.

"That's all I wanted to know," he said quite amicably. And gathering up his papers he left the room.

Not all his papers. He left one behind—possibly one that he treasured most. I have lost it now, but I remember that it was a receipted laundry bill for a week in 1929.

EVOE.



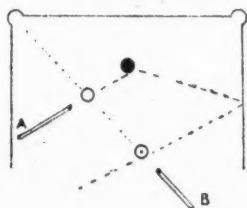
BEWARE THE JABBERWOCK





## On First Looking into Chapman's Homburg

I SHALL be writing about billiards every week for the next year or two, unless stopped.



The above diagram shows, in diagrammatic form, what can happen when two players attempt to cue their balls at the same time, a very common mistake in the amateur game. A plays a straightforward cushion cannon off red, with just a touch of drag, but fails because B has meanwhile driven spot through the place where white was before A played. B goes clean into the top left-hand pocket. The only points that arise here are:

Whose turn was it?

What shot was B attempting?

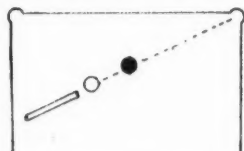
What would the position be if C (not shown) had removed red and rolled it into the hall for the kitten to play with?

I hope to deal with these points more fully next week.

Billiards (with which I include the game of snooker, or snooker pool) has never been more popular, and its devotees are numbered literally in thousands. These people deserve a break. An idea of their numbers can be gained from the fact that if all the cloth on billiard-tables throughout the country was made into trousers for them, it is estimated that more than half of them would be in baulk up to the knees.

A point to note here is that when making up trousers out of an old billiard-table, no attempt should be made to incorporate the existing pockets. You will only lose money by it.

I want now to say a word or two about some interesting ways in which you are not allowed to make breaks.



More good than harm is done by this sort of diagram. Obviously, if you bang red into the top pocket and put enough goo on your ball to fetch it

back where it started from, you can re-spot red and bang it in again. W. J. Peall did it six hundred and twelve times running in 1890. There was an outcry, probably led by the man who had to keep fishing red out of the pocket, and the spot stroke was barred.

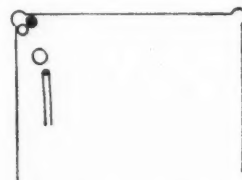
So, in 1907, was the anchor stroke. I don't know what the anchor stroke is, but I do know that Tom Reece made a break of 499,135 (unfinished) with it in a game of half a million up. It took him five weeks, during which time his opponent, a Mr Chapman, did not visit the table.

The fact that this break was unfinished is something of a puzzle. It hardly seems reasonable that a man should get so near the half-million mark and then give up. But it may be that Mr. Reece had for some days been worried by a feeling that he was monopolizing the table, and at last turned round and catching sight of Mr. Chapman sitting there asked him, out of simple kindness, whether he would care to have a shot. Or it may have been Mr. Chapman himself who brought the break to a close. It would be understandable, I think, if after seeing the 499,000 safely on the board he began to put on his coat, saying perhaps a trifle bitterly that it was Reece's game anyway and he ought to be getting along as his wife would be expecting him. Even the best of us, struggling along in the thirties against an opponent who has just topped ninety, have sometimes glanced at our watches and found it rather later than we thought. All honour, then, to Mr. Chapman who waited five weeks before applying the closure.

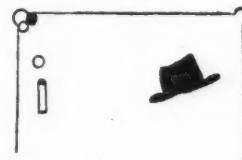
The extraordinary suggestion has been made to me, by a toady who sometimes looks over my shoulder when I am writing, that Reece's break was unfinished because the game was over—that he had in fact already scored the balance of the points required in an earlier break. I cannot accept this. Even if I were to see it stated categorically in print I should have difficulty in believing such a thing. "Reece failed at 865, but at his next visit to the table was more successful, amassing a useful 499,135." The disparity is too ludicrous.

Although the anchor stroke is now barred, an attempt to analyse this great break of Reece's may not be out of place. For this purpose I shall assume that the anchor stroke is played when red and the opponent's ball are jammed in the mouth of a pocket, the

cue ball then being brushed against them to score a cannon. Here, then, is the position when Reece had scored 278,826.



The point to note here is that the cue ball is not in reality larger than the other two. It only looks larger because Reece was well set by this time and had his eye in, as they say.



And here, by way of comparison, is the general situation at 435,464. We are now well into the second month and the cue has worn perhaps as much as half an inch shorter, but there is no sign of weariness in Reece's play. That sureness of touch and absolute precision of stroke which are the hallmark of the great player have not deserted him, and a glance at the position of the balls shows that he is good for another 60,000 and more yet. The dark object on the right is Chapman's hat (now barred), from which I take my title.

I ought in fairness to add that the main source of the information used in this article is *Fifty Years of Sport*, recently published by *The Daily Mail*—a book which contains 576 closely packed pages of delicious statistics about every kind of sport and game from Association Football to Yachting. It is marred by a misprint on page 143.

H. F. E.

"CHURCHILL—

—by Lt.-Col. D. H. Amory, Conservative M.P. for Tiverton, Devon, last night: I believe that in a year or two we shall see that great man rally once more this certain brands of pipe tobacco, because of the rising cost of leaf tobacco. Cigarettes are not affected."—*Daily paper*.

Ah, but what about cigars?

## At the Pictures

### FEMMES FATALES

PEOPLE who have read **ANDRÉ GIDE's** novel, and seen the film *La Symphonie Pastorale* (Director: **JEAN DELANNOY**) two or three times—it carried off all sorts of prizes at the Cannes Film Festival last year—seem to be more profoundly and emotionally impressed with its greatness than I managed to be after one visit. The tragic little story (I don't quite know why I say "little," except that it is deliberately limited and, in a sense, artificial) deals with the pastor of an Alpine village who finds and brings up a girl blind from birth. She grows up to become a disruptive influence in his family, focus of love and jealousy—for his own love, though he will not admit it, is more than paternal, his wife is jealous, and he is jealous of his son who loves her too. An operation gives the girl sight; unable to deal with the situation, she kills herself. **MICHELE MORGAN** as the blind girl is wonderfully good, and the impressive snow scenes—real snow for once in a film—are handled with great brilliance. There is constant pleasure too, as always in a French picture, to be found in innumerable small details of character and place (the pastor's home has the air of a genuine home, in a genuine community). That the film left me comparatively unmoved emotionally, while I was constantly aware of all these merits, must be put down to some unfortunate limitation of my own.

I never saw the other version of *Of Human Bondage*, the one with **Bette Davis** and **Leslie Howard**, which by all accounts was something special. The new one, directed by **EDMUND GOULDING** (who seems to be regarded at the moment as the Somerset Maugham expert; he also directed *The Razor's Edge*,

which began as quite a different kind of novel) is not very distinguished, but is noteworthy in introducing the new talent of **ELEANOR PARKER**, in the well-known big dramatic part of the Cockney waitress, or slut. Perfect she is not, and there is a kind of continuous

least some of the time she makes the abominable *Mildred* interesting. This is more, I think, than can be said for **PAUL HENREID** as the long-suffering *Philip*. He wasn't the right man for the part, of course.

The player who really wakes up the whole show is **EDMUND GWENN** as the ebullient *Mr. Athelny*. He too has little to work with except the conventional characteristics of a "Lover of Life"; but he brings them out with such dash and vitality that one feels he is a real personage and watches with eagerness for his appearance. A solid, well-meaning picture, with an unfortunate opening ("Paris, 1897") and most of the sharp **Maughams** edges smoothed away in case they should disturb anybody.

"Good music" and psychology, two of the most popular current ingredients of a film, are cunningly combined by M-G-M in *The Secret Heart* (Director: **ROBERT Z. LEONARD**). One might suppose they wanted to do something on the lines of *The Seventh Veil*, except that in that we got Good Music at length; *The Secret Heart* gives us only easily-assimilable snippets of an obviously "dramatic" or wistfully appealing kind—Liszt, Chopin, Debussy. Most of it is played on the piano by **JUNE ALLYSON** as a girl who has grown up warped by the memory of a weak, self-pitying father who used to spend his evenings drinking as he played the same sort of stuff before he threw himself over a cliff to solve a problem of embezzlement. **CLAUDETTE COLBERT** appears as the mother, **WALTER PIDGEON** as her old love, who, of course—do you have to be told?—resumes his place in her affections; much of the playing has an attractive ease of manner and everything comes right in the end. **LIONEL BARRYMORE**, as a psychiatrist called in to cure the girl's obsession, enlivens a scene or two with reptilian geniality. But the film is best summed up as "hokum." **R. M.**



J.H.D.O.V.

[La Symphonie Pastorale

### SOLO SMILER

Amelie . . . . .	LINE NORO
Casteran . . . . .	LOUVIGNY
The Pastor . . . . .	PIERRE BLANCHARD
Gertrude . . . . .	MICHELE MORGAN
Jacques . . . . .	JEAN DESAILLY

sameness about the character as she plays it that suggests the almost rhythmical repetition of a comparatively small group of tricks; but for at



J.H.D.

[Of Human Bondage

### HIS LOVE WAS BLIND.

Mildred Rogers . . . . .	ELEANOR PARKER
Philip Carey . . . . .	PAUL HENREID



## Staggered Hours

I USUALLY display great tact and circumspection when calling my friends' attention to any slight shortcomings in their appearance, but I felt bound to speak plainly to Albert the other night in the Blue Duck Inn. He could not have chosen a hat less suited to the high taper of his head. He wore one of those shallow pork-pie things. It resembled an inverted soup-plate balanced on a large ostrich egg.

When I joined him at the counter and broached the matter he turned on me sharply. I had never seen him more fretful. His hat revolved rather more slowly than his head and came to rest with a gentle tremor.

"You see what I mean, Albert," I remonstrated.

"This ain't *my* hat," he fumed. "It's my son's, dash it!"

Then he did an extraordinary thing. He raised one foot and thrashed it down as though pedalling a bicycle.

"It's back to front now," I observed.

"It'll come round in a minute," he snapped, pedalling again. "I'm sick of putting it straight."

"But why wear the thing at all?"

"It's all a mistake," he said indignantly. "That's what this 'ere staggering of working hours has done for me."

"Surely not?"

"Ho, yes," he replied, thrashing his foot up and down. "I always used to go to work ten minutes after my son. Now I've been staggered, I leave home half an hour *before* him, and I keep on taking his hat by mistake."

"But staggering is an excellent idea," I said soothingly. "It will be the end of queues and packed trains."

"It don't agree with me," he persisted. "I don't know where I am now. It's upset me whole routine."

I watched him with misgiving. He pedalled so furiously that his elbow slipped from the counter.

"This is not like you," I said, brushing him down and replacing his hat. "You must pull yourself together. It's merely a question of adjusting your habits to a new schedule."

In emphasizing my words my own elbow slipped. I began to feel distinctly uneasy. He gave me a nasty look and pedalled away like mad.

"Why don't you keep still?" he asked.

"The very thing I was going to ask you," I replied. "You've fallen into a most distressing trick of thrashing your foot."



"... but I think I can persuade the band to play for just half an hour longer—in fact I *KNOW* I can."

"What about you?" he cried.

"There!" I exclaimed. "You did it again! The trouble is that a habit so quickly becomes unconscious. Be firm, Albert; remember the slogan—'Staggering is for the benefit of all.' Don't be a mere bundle of habits—adapt yourself!"

I spoke with such vigour that my elbow slipped again. Then, to my horror, I caught myself at it. There was no doubt about it—I was pedalling myself. I clung to the counter in dismay.

"We're both doing it," I cried nervously.

"It's this 'ere staggering that's done it," said Albert.

"I refuse to believe it!" I shouted. "I will not have my life disrupted by a mere habit."

"Funny thing, habit," said the innkeeper. "You'll soon get used to it."

"Used to what?" I panted, pedalling with Albert.

"I've just had the brass foot-rail taken away for repair."

### Blanket Apology Impending.

"Mrs. —, it was stated, had fourteen convictions, six for larceny and six for assault. She had served in the Waafs for twelve months. 'There is nothing that can be said in her favour,' declared the police."—*Daily paper*.

## An Innocent at Large

XVII—Boston, Massachusetts

I AM quite sure that the privilege of poking fun at Boston, Massachusetts, should be reserved exclusively for Americans. I am equally certain that of all foreigners the Englishman is the least fitted and entitled to break this unwritten law. Nevertheless, here is one bold, foolish and hungry enough to rush in, as it were.

Boston is one of the best national jokes in the United States, occupying something like the position that a combination of Cheltenham, Poona, the tatters of squirearchy, the B.B.C. (Third Programme for preference) and Aberdeen would hold in the affections of the British. The chief items

claim that Bostonese has evolved from the somewhat precise nursery language with which Bostonians address their multitudes of pigeons and squirrels on the Common.

As Charles Morton has pointed out, Bostonians often ignore the letter "r" and speak of *hat-disease* and *hat-attack*. But outside a grocery store on Tremont I heard a buxom Mrs. Mopp say "I've not been in this shaarp for yars and yars and yars." In New York of course it would have been "yeerrs and yeerrs and yeerrs."

The British Navy will be pleased to know that their old soccer pitch in the Public Gardens is still in use. I watched several games there and recognized a few touches and movements as unmistakably Evertonian and Glaswegian in tradition. But the play as a whole was hardly up to Football League standard and was chiefly remarkable for the vocal performance of a goal-keeper who wore a padded jersey with "NB" in white block capitals on the chest, knee-pads and ankle socks. When he was not picking the ball from where the net should have been he was fulminating savagely against his colleagues in the voice of a town-crier.

"Kick the goal!" he would yell, "Al, you goddam fool, pass, pass, pass! Oh, Jeez!"

And he punctuated his commentary with asides made to spectators standing round the goal-posts—"Didya ever see such firing? Jeez, they're like a lotta quiz kids."

When the opposing side was awarded a penalty for a minor technical infringement—somebody floored somebody else fifty yards or more from the ball—the goal-keeper leapt round his cage like an enraged baboon. The ball was placed in position; the referee blew his whistle, and as he did so the goal-keeper dived brilliantly to the right. A second or so later the kick was taken and the ball lobbed over his prostrate form. He lay there nursing his grievances and inventing invective until the game had been resumed.

But perhaps he was not a real Bostonian after all.

Boston's economic caution is seen in its simulated affection for old clothes and its sneering disparagement of Manhattan's and California's sartorial innovations, in its refusal to contemplate any radical improvement in the city's transport system, and in its excellent private collections of silver-paper, tinfoil, twine, empty cartons and bottles, hotel ash-trays and other people's books. I am told that Bostonians tolerate the superfluity of squirrels and pigeons on the Common only because the showmanship of these pets or pests brings down great quantities of loose timber (twigs and such) which are greedily collected to feed the home fires of Boston.

Bostonians never use taxi-cabs if they can help it, and taxi-drivers never use Bostonians if they can avoid them. Boston's streets are very narrow, with the pavement area running down the middle (but flush with the roadway) and with raised sidewalks for the use of visitors and the off-side wheels of taxis and delivery vans. A Boston taxi-cab can always be relied upon to find the longest and most expensive distance between two points and to lap every round-about at least half a dozen times before flying off at an inappropriate tangent.

Boston is renowned for its cooking, which is very English in its humidity and insipidity. The staple articles of diet are Boston beans, chowder, codfish and Indian pudding. Boston is of course teetotal and non-smoking.

Boston's puritanism is so strong that visitors start blushing with shame as soon as they arrive. A comprehensive



Hollowood. Boston humor.

Reconstruction of British crime.

of humour in Boston appear to be its accent, its caution, its conservatism and its general air of superiority. In addition there are Boston beans, codfish, and the brilliant antics of Boston's own cartoonist, Francis W. Dahl—for Boston has a remarkable aptitude for smug self-ridicule.

The Boston, *Borston* or *Boerston*, accent cannot be explained rationally. I have heard so many ingenious excuses for it (outside Boston) and immodest disclaimers (inside Boston) that my mind is hopelessly fogged and I can offer nothing very satisfactory to the orthoëpists and philologists. One theory is that Boston reverted to the tongue of its forefathers at a time when the King's English meant no more than the English of George III, and has remained faithful to it ever since. Bostonians claim, therefore, that the authentic Shakespeare cannot be heard to-day outside Boston. Another theory is that Bostonese is a careless mixture of Billingsgate (acquired via the harbour), Harvard (the language of Boston's village school) and Brooklyn "vacationese" (or the strange sounds made by New Yorkers on holiday). And there are some who

code of decency covers almost every activity and every square inch of flesh, and the Watch and Ward Society conducts a vigilant and perpetual campaign against all forms of levity.

Whether Bostonians like it or not they must admit that their city is still remarkably New England in character. Increasingly so perhaps; for New England is becoming a replica of England or Britain even in its economics and its fiscal problems. Like Britain, New England was once the



*Salvage operation.*

undisputed hub of a prosperous trading circle. (In fact Boston still calls itself "The Hub" in its newspaper headlines.) Then, with the opening up of the Middle West and the Pacific coastal region geographical hegemony passed to Chicago and its underworld. Boston may still be called the centre of gravity in one sense, but it is no longer the hub of American trade. The port has become a depressed area, and the cotton, boot and shoe, and printing industries have all been outstripped by those of newer centres. And, as in Britain, these setbacks have caused curious reactions. Some Bostonians are for clinging to what is left and preserving it in an atmosphere of faded gentility. They want Boston to remember the past and ignore the sirens of approaching decadence. Others, the new blood of New England, believe in change, revolutionary change; not perhaps as revolutionary as the change in the Old Country, but something that would certainly make the Watch and Ward Committee sit up.

Boston is like a corner of England in many other ways—in its fondness for statuary, its kindness to dumb animals, its narrow streets and its suspicious attitude towards the foreigner. The wild life of the Common is an extraordinary thing. It consists of squirrels, pigeons and ducks in enormous numbers. When I first went up to London from the Midlands I was astonished at the tameness of the

pigeons in Trafalgar Square. Well, compared with their fellows in Boston they are reserved to the point of bashfulness. No pigeon in London could be as arrogantly assertive as the humblest member of the Boston fraternity. Boston's pigeons are shockingly overfed and their indulgence hangs about them in double chins, bleary eyes and dreadful paunches. They fly, it is true, but they make it look like hard labour. Most of them suffer from gout, I am told.

If you sit down in the Public Gardens the pigeons join you, expecting an invitation to lunch or tea. They go through your pockets very carefully, and then when dreamy languor or indigestion calls a halt to their thieving they lean against you and fall asleep. If you smoke they will fly straight into your face to inspect your cigarette or pipe, and will hover about until they have made quite sure it is not edible. Moreover, they love to take risks. To recover brilliantly with a Matthews swerve from what looks like a terrible head-on collision with a human body is their idea of fun and games. And they love the statues, too, even if they do show their affection in a peculiar way.

But I can forgive the pigeons everything when I think of the squirrels. These animals are the delight of the English countryside, charming fellows whose timidity and thrift make them universally popular. But here in Boston the squirrel is a rapacious, uncouth and prodigal exhibitionist. If you pause in your walk to consult your diary (as I did) every squirrel on the Common responds to the sight and sound of paper. They leap at your hips and bound away in a somersault; they work their way inside your trousers; they climb on to your back and try to read over your shoulder. In addition to the squirrels, ducks and pigeons, Boston's Public Garden and Common shelter ravens, frogs and thousands of dogs. The ravens are honorary members of the Edgar Allen Poe Society.

Finally, a word or less about Boston's politics, which, oddly enough, are a laughing matter. Everybody I spoke to chuckled and slapped his thigh about the doings of the

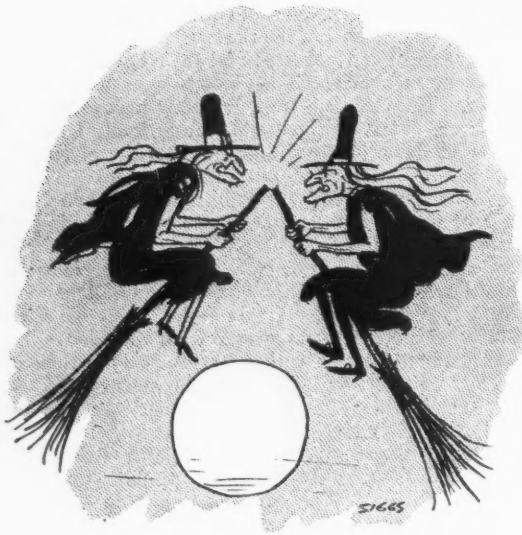


*Boston's pets.*

boss, James M. Curley. Not long ago, they say, Mr. Curley was sentenced to a period in gaol and fined \$1,000 by the Federal Court on a charge of double dealings over certain war contracts. But Boston welcomed him back with open arms after his holiday and immediately hoisted him to a position of civic power if not dignity.

There must be more in Boston than meets the eye.  
HOD.





"I thought so—a woman driver!"

## A Table for Two

**G**IVE me a table for two :  
 My lady is coming to dine.  
 Only the best will do,  
 The food of the gods—and the wine.  
 Give me a table for two,  
 A table that's hidden away,  
 Where the band will permit us to coo,  
 And no one can hear what I say.  
 Let there be flowers—a shaded light :  
 Only her eyes—those eyes!—must be bright,  
 Let that nice waiter, from some foreign land,  
 Always attend us, for he'll understand.  
 My lady is dining :  
 All must be right.  
 A goddess is dining to-night.

Waiter! Saddle your horses!  
 Away to the gorgeous East!  
 Find me two or three courses  
 Fit for an angel's feast.  
 Make me a soup of the seaweed  
 That swims in the China Sea:  
 Pack in a box the flying fox  
 Who lives in the banyan tree.  
 And they say in Ceylon there are monkeys  
 You can grill, or roast,  
 And, served on toast,  
 They taste of the finest tea.  
 Bring me a dish of tropical fish,  
 Bring me a turtle's egg:  
 Bring me the tail of a baby whale,  
 Bring me a lion's leg.  
 Bring me the part  
 Of an eagle's heart  
 That's ever so good, they say;

Bring me the wings  
 Of the bird that sings  
 In the trees of the Moon in May.  
 You'll know what I mean  
 When you have seen  
 The one who is on the way:  
 I'm mad as a hatter,  
 And money's no matter  
 To-day!

Give me a table for two,  
 The food of the gods—and the wine.  
 I fear she likes fizz—they do :  
 But I shall be true to the Rhine.  
 Give me a table for two,  
 A table demure and discreet,  
 Where a lady can slip off a shoe,  
 And the dancers won't tread on our feet.  
 Not near the kitchens—and not in a draught :  
 Not where they'd notice if anyone laughed.  
 Let there be sherries before she arrives :  
 It's rather a moment in two little lives.  
 My lady is dining :  
 All must be right.  
 A goddess is dining to-night.

A. P. H.

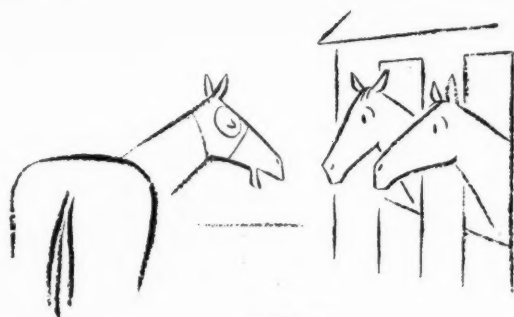
## Mrs. Murch

**W**HEN the domestic agency told us a week ago that at long last we could have a replacement for Treasa Wonnacott (a young woman who left the warm bath of service with us for the open seas of married life), we were surprised to find ourselves a little sad at the thought of saying good-bye to Mrs. Murch, who was, in her own words, "a temp'ry part-timer, off and on."

Mrs. Murch was a large, talkative woman from Putney—she was born there too, she said, when Putney was Putney—and although when she first started coming to us on Mondays and Thursdays we fondly imagined that she was going to undertake some of the more onerous household tasks, it was soon apparent that the principal reason for her visits was to escape from the drudgery of her own housework. "When you've been married as long as what I 'ave," she explained, "you like to get out and about a bit, just to reelize what a blessin' it is there's no place like 'ome."

My wife was usually too busy to listen to much of Mrs. Murch's conversation, but at eleven o'clock she used to stop work (she scrubbed floors and turned mattresses while Mrs. Murch got on with "the 'eavy work") and join her for coffee and biscuits. During these breaks for refreshment Mrs. Murch used to air her grievances in front of the lounge fire, and she made it abundantly clear that she took a poor view of most things. "What other view can I take, with the odds and ends I 'ave to use for money?" she said. In spite of her pessimism she looked healthy enough, but sometimes, when she felt that life was too much of a burden even for her mammoth shoulders, she would announce her intention of seeking refuge from Mr. Murch and the English climate in some quiet little place "like Tristran da Shandy, f'rinstance," or of going to stay with her married daughter in Dutch 'Olland. "But if you reely want to make me 'appy," she used to say, "let me 'ave Bailey."

She mentioned Bailey very frequently, and for several weeks my wife imagined him to be one of Mrs. Murch's



"And there we were, stooging around at twenty thousand feet."

former admirers, for whose company she was now anxious to abandon her sub-human husband. "But are you sure this Mr. Bailey reciprocates your affections?" my wife asked her one morning. "Have you seen him recently?" Mrs. Murch gave a snort of disgust. "Mister Bailey!" she said. "Don't imagine for a split minute as I'm 'ankerin' after one of these so-called men. 'Usbands and mushrooms 're all right when they are all right, but you never reely know until it's too late. No," she said, "I mean Bailey, the island paradise where they 'ave all them dancers."

Although Mrs. Murch discussed most things, from celluloid collars to embalming, she never disclosed whether or not she approved of the present Government. The only time she mentioned it at all was on the first of January, when she said that she had read as the Gov'ment 'ad overtaken the mines at last. "And does your newspaper approve of the idea?" my wife asked. "My paper can't even tell what 'orses are goin' to do," Mrs. Murch said acidly; "can yours?" She never mentioned the subject again, but at a later date she did confess that she was not altogether happy about democracy. "It can't be all it's cracked up to be," she said, "not when they allow a man of Mr. Murch's unintelligence to vote." My wife suggested that perhaps Mrs. Murch was underestimating her husband's intellect. "Underestimin'!" Mrs. Murch said. "Why, my old man don't even know 'is own mind, and 'eaven only knows that's little enough to ask of 'im." "Oh, well," my wife said, "no one's husband is perfect, you know; all men are very much the same." "Huh!" Mrs. Murch said. "As what?"

When the coffee session was over Mrs. Murch used to return to her duties, but by the time she had partially dried a few items of crockery, dusted a vase or two, and ensured that the pages of the current magazines were numbered consecutively, she was well-nigh exhausted. She wanted to do more of course, but she was badly hampered by alarmingly frequent changes in her physical composition. "I know you'll be as disappointed as what I am," she used to say, "but I shan't be able to run through the 'ole programme to-day—I've got me legs back." She moved slowly enough at the best of times, but when she got her legs back she seemed to have the greatest difficulty even in keeping up with herself. Her legs returned to her so often that eventually we were prepared to believe that underneath her fully-concertina-ed lisle stockings she was concealing a couple of boomerangs.

In addition to her leg news Mrs. Murch invariably had some other physical addition or subtraction to report. "On Sund'y me knees went," she told us once, "and now I've got another liver." On one gala occasion she woke up on a Saturday morning with another liver and another chest, and had to spend the entire week-end trying to get rid of them. We became so accustomed to Mrs. Murch's mutability that when she announced that her little nephew had grown another foot since she last saw him we didn't even raise an eyebrow.

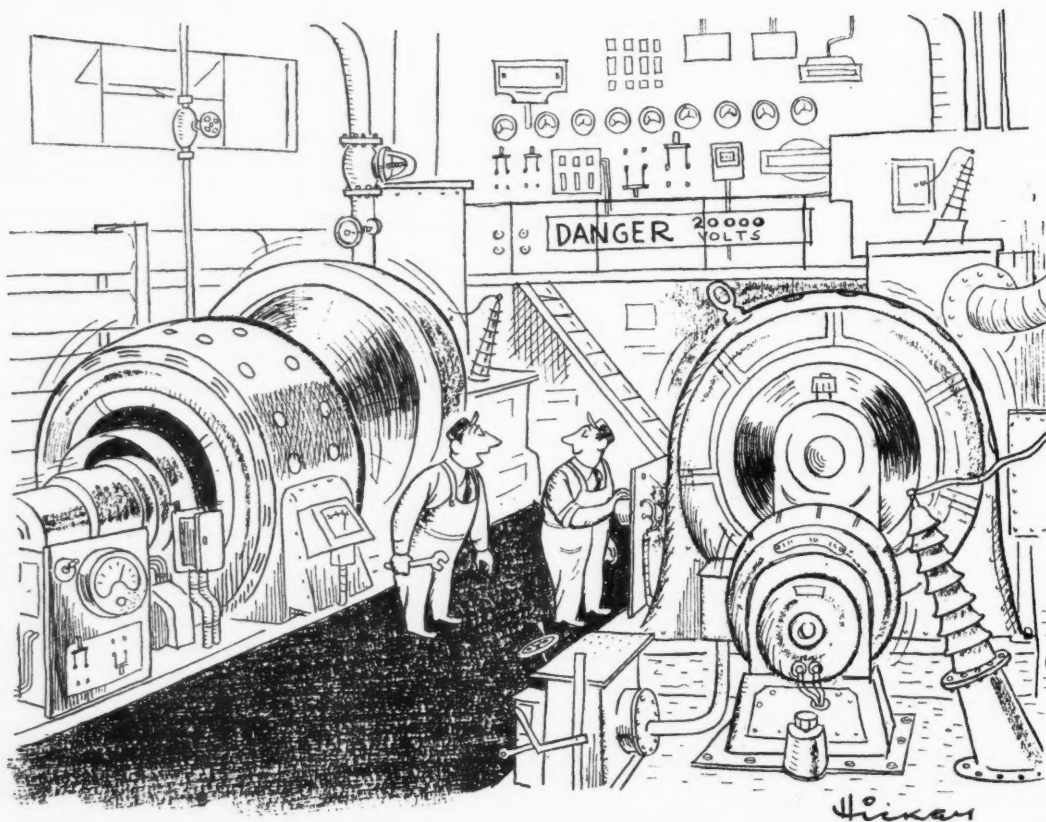
And now Mrs. Murch has gone. We didn't get much work out of her, it is true, and never once did she manage to "run through the 'ole programme" (the overture and the intermission were undoubtedly her favourite numbers), but we can't help missing her a little, for with the departure of Mrs. Murch our home has lost yet another link with that effortless, unhurried way of life that is fast vanishing. At any moment now, we feel, the Government may overtake us.

#### F. O. LANGLEY

WITH deep regret we learned last week of the death of F. O. Langley, Metropolitan Police Magistrate at the Old Street Court, a regular contributor to Punch from 1905 to 1920. Over the signature "Henry" he wrote "The Watch Dogs," a diary of experiences in the North Midland Territorial Division, with which he went to France in 1915, and later at 3rd and 4th Army Headquarters. He gained the M.C. and the Legion of Honour.



"Mary, your kitten again—that makes twenty-five shillings this week."



*"How about cutting it off for twenty minutes and popping out for a coffee?"*

### Staying Power

**I** WILL come and stay with you, darling,  
for a limited number of days,  
because you were born in the city  
and can still remember its ways.

(I can see in a glass, darkly,  
you and me at the Berkeley.)

You will not, I think, take me walking  
more than a mile or two,  
I do not believe the rain-swept heath  
appeals very much to you.

(Once we walked from the car  
to the Plaza Cinema.)

I doubt if you'll take me on Sunday  
to tea with the wife of the vet  
who once met my father at Ramsgate  
and hasn't forgotten it yet.

(Oh, the fugginess of your flat!  
Pray God you remember that!)

No one will make me play poker,  
no plan will be slowly revealed  
for taking me off to Lord Scotney's  
to visit a horse in a field.

(If you really insist, I will speak  
a word or two to your peke.)

We will rise very late in the morning,  
and slip very early to bed,  
we will sit with our books by the wireless,  
and very few words will be said.

(No earthly enchantment transcends  
the obstinate silence of friends.)

I will come and stay with you, darling,  
be it ever so far to roam;  
if I never look out of the window  
I can fancy myself at home.

(Oh, trumpets, sound the Retreat!  
Farewell to thee, Oxford Street.)

V. G.





SOUTHWARD HO!

## Impressions of Parliament

### Business Done:

**Tuesday, January 21st.**—House of Commons: Back to Work.

**Wednesday, January 22nd.**—House of Lords: Lord Henderson Tightens the Belts.

House of Commons: The Red Light—and All That.

**Thursday, January 23rd.**—House of Commons: Gun and Fumes!

**Tuesday, January 21st.**—It is usually said that the House of Commons, returning to work after a recess, resembles a school going back after the hols. But to-day the House more closely resembled a particularly blood-thirsty crowd at a Roman lion-and-Christian meeting—or perhaps a particularly partisan gathering at a Test match.

From the word "Go!" which was uttered (purely figuratively of course) by Mr. Speaker at the opening of the proceedings, there were shouting and counter-shouting. There were even what the more respectable newspapers call "Ministerial cheers" and "Loud Opposition cheers." Sometimes we had both at once, and it was difficult to follow who was cheering whom.

Some Ministers get vastly more cheers from the Opposition than from their own supporters—and not all of them ironical, either. And people like Mr. CHURCHILL are apt to get cheers from all parts of the House.

But most of to-day's cheers were on strictly Party lines. And quite a few of them were definitely ironical. Everybody seemed as eager as the average football fan to yell and barrack. Fortunately, Mr. Speaker has a powerful voice, and his habit (reminiscent of the "view-haloo" of the hunting field) of drawing out, in times of turbulence, the name of the Member he is calling—"Mr. Jo-o-nes," say—seems to cut through the most infernal din.

Between times some good fun was had by all. Some Ministers and others seemed to have spent a good deal of their recess thinking up profound thoughts. These went with the usual swing of novelties, and were gratefully seized on as further excuses for more shouting and counter-shouting.

Jolliest of all the interludes in this panto-like afternoon was that provided by Mr. GEORGE BUCHANAN, who is Scotland's Housing Minister. He was asked to defend—or defied to defend is perhaps nearer the mark—the use of concrete floors in Scottish new houses. Mr. BUCHANAN did not try. He just

said they *were* used, and that was that. Critics on both sides of the House jumped up with bright quips and cranks that made it clear to the Minister that *concrete* floors were greatly preferred to *abstract* floors—which some unkind critics seemed to suggest were the only sort provided by His Majesty's Present Advisers.

However, it takes more than a scrap on the Floor to upset Mr. BUCHANAN, and he slogged his way through to the end of his questions.

Your scribe offers to posterity these pearls which were cast before the Great Elected:

*By Mr. Buchanan.* I am not a thought reader.



### THE FIGURE-SKATER

The President of the Board of Trade

I am always disappointed with *everything* in housing. (Opposition cheers.) However high the figures were I should *still* be worried.

*By Mr. George Wallace.* Is the War Minister aware of at least this fact—that time marches on?

*By Sir Waldron Smithers.* Will the Government publish, in parallel columns, a statement on Britain's present economic position and the Socialist Party's election manifesto?

Neatest score of the Question-hour went to Mr. HUGH DALTON, Chancellor of the Exchequer, who rebuked a questioner with the words: "The honourable Member is trying to draw wrong deductions from irrelevant figures!"

This gained such a "hand" that the hon. Member in question was unable to make audible his (doubtless crushing) riposte.

A Bill to give the Government power to collect still more figures and facts about industry was the business of the day. The Government commended the proposal as essential to the economic survival of the country. The Opposition condemned it as an unwarrantable prying into private affairs and a waste of time and energy. Each side said its piece with great gusto and at length, but in the end the Bill was passed, so it must be assumed that the needed data *are* essential to Britain's economic survival—or something.

**Wednesday, January 22nd.**—Their Lordships' House contains few Members on whom the rôle of bearer of ill-tidings sits less familiarly than Lord HENDERSON. He has a cheery grin and a disarming manner which, combined with a neat, compact and effective method of speech, normally delight his Peers.

But to-day Fate (and the Government) had cast him as the Grumpy Grocer in the Westminster Pantomime, and—being a dutiful Lord-in-Waiting—"Willie" proceeded to make the best of the job. He announced (in precisely the tone of a grocer whose stocks are low) that wheat and flour were short and that there was no certainty the bread ration would not be cut. As to fats, there might be some improvement, and soap would also be a little more plentiful. But bacon would not. Everybody (almost) was short of goods, and we had not suffered so much as we might.

"A grave statement," said Lord CHERWELL. "We in Britain had less food in the first year of peace than in the last year of war."

Lord WOOLTON, who, as a former Minister of Food, knows a thing or two about the subject, mildly urged that a little extra food would give more real satisfaction to a miner than the knowledge that the mines were now the property of the nation. Some Labour Lords seemed to doubt this, and Lord WOOLTON, while conceding that the Government might not be the author of *all* the nation's troubles, thought it might have done something to lessen them, but had not.

Lord ADDISON, retorting for the Government, claimed as evidence of the Government's courage the recent issue of a depressing White Paper on Britain's economic position. This also proved that Britain Could Take It, and that the Government Trusted the People.

Fearing an Outburst of Slogans, their Lordships passed hastily to the next business.

The Commons listened, not without



*"We've got to fight somewhere else—they say this is a beauty spot."*

surprise, to an appeal from the Minister of Defence, Mr. A. V. ALEXANDER, to Britain's 20,000 Forces deserters to give themselves up by March 31st. This would make honest (and eventually free) men of them, and their surrender would be accounted a far, far better thing than they had ever done when they faced the courts-martial.

The House then passed without divisions the Third Readings of Bills dealing with agricultural wages and motor-driving licences. Some Opposition Members seemed to find something symbolical (for the Government) in a Bill which is designed to improve the standard of safety on Britain's roads. Certainly, enough red lights have been displayed by Ministers and Opposition leaders in past weeks to keep even the most careless political driver within due bounds. But in politics it is impossible to be certain.

*Thursday, January 23rd.*—Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, Minister of Austerity as some unkind critics call him, was asked to-day to order the making of more big socks. He said he'd see

what he could do, whereupon his questioner asked him to receive a deputation of "large men" to discuss the whole matter. About this he was non-committal.

That great jester, Mr. RUPERT DE LA BÈRE (who is much more subtle than is generally supposed), distinguished himself again. Mr. DALTON was asked to give details about the number of Civil Servants, and said he would do so later. Whereupon Mr. DE LA BÈRE asked gravely: "Are you aware that that is precisely the answer I did not want you to give? I wanted an answer to which I could have put forward a most valuable supplementary!"

"It'll keep," was the effect of Mr. DALTON's reply.

Less subtle, but no less productive of mirth, was the reply of Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL, the Minister of Fuel and Power, who, retorting to a comment that Cabinet Ministers had not looked happy in a photograph depicting the handing over of the mines to national ownership, replied: "If it comes to making allegations about Cabinet Ministers' faces, there are no oil

paintings on the other side." It was that sort of afternoon.

It was left to Mr. HECTOR HUGHES to bring down the curtain to roars of applause by an excellent imitation of the gentleman who enlivens radio shows by inviting all and sundry to take a sninch of puff.

He denounced some practice of justices' clerks and asked that the Home Secretary should take steps to step it. Above the din he was understood to amend this to stips to stap it.

After which a discussion on anything would have seemed dull. As it was.

#### Starting from Scratch

*Advertisements, all by the same advertiser, all within five inches of each other in the same "Situations Vacant" column on the same day:*

"FIRST-CLASS Cook wanted; modern kitchen; daily help given; parlourmaid and housemaid kept; comfortable quarters; highest salary paid."

"PARLOURMAID for modern labour-saving house; cook and housemaid kept; staff stay for years; highest salary paid."

"HOUSEMAID for modern labour-saving house; cook and parlourmaid kept; highest salary paid; staff stay for years."



## Fog-Proof

**W**HEN I greet the early dawn  
With a comprehensive yawn  
So superlative in brawn  
And in brain  
That I'd gladly give a yell,  
But the neighbours might rebel,  
So perhaps it's just as well  
To refrain,

When, on rising with a bound,  
I observe that all around  
Is, to put it mildly, browned  
Out by fog,  
I remain as fresh and bright  
As the nimble parasite  
That has visions of a bite  
On its dog.

Does this cut you to the bone?  
Do you ask why I alone  
('Twould be natural, I own)  
Am so stirred?  
Is it something that's revealed  
To the pardlike spirit steeled  
'Gainst depression, but concealed  
From the herd?

If you do, I'm free to state  
That a fog's a thing I hate  
And severely objugate  
By my gods,  
But I thought I'd take a new  
Unexpected point of view,  
And although it isn't true  
What's the odds? DUM-DUM.

o o

## Back at the Wheel

Buying It—II

**T**HERE is no such thing as an exactly equal inclination towards each of two alternative courses; you may think there is, but on trying to make the decision by spinning a coin you will inevitably find yourself either secretly pleased because "heads" endorses you in what you really want, or secretly resentful because "tails" does not. If you are a weak character, and the coin says "tails" when you really want "heads," the chances are you will pocket it guiltily and pretend that it said "heads" anyway. After all, it was only a matter of luck that it didn't.

And if, as a weak character, you have enough redeeming honesty to admit to trickery of this kind you will understand just how I felt about Bartrop's attitude to Mr. Jutterby's God Goer. The truth is, I had determined to buy the car, and but for

hurting the feelings of a talented mechanic who had travelled all the way from Finsbury Park with a bag of spanners in answer to a telephoned appeal to save me from myself, I would have sent Bartrop away there and then, before it got quite dark. As it was I introduced him to the Jutterbys with a word of apology and explanation. I knew nothing about cars, I said (how many small fortunes has this confession cost me at how many wayside garages!), so I had asked Mr. Bartrop, who knew everything, to come along. I hoped they wouldn't mind.

Mr. Jutterby did, I think, and when Bartrop (who had said nothing: were they not trying to sell the car, and consequently his enemies?) shone his torch on a back tyre and grunted "Smooth," Mr. Jutterby advanced menacingly with the starting-handle and said "What's that to you?"

But Mrs. Jutterby, rebuttoning her white fish-shop coat for the formality of introduction, expressed her delight, and with implicit recognition of my good sense spoke at length of a friend of hers who had been taking his family to Whipsnade in his new used car when the carburator blew out.

"The what?" Bartrop was shaking his head over the size, shape or condition of the luggage-rack.

"The carburator, that carburates the petrol."

"What about my tea?" said Mr. Jutterby. The throwing of a distant switch at that moment caused the street-lamp under which he stood to blossom yellowly, touching his gaunt outlines with radiance. His wife stood on tip-toe and made a show of adjusting his nondescript muffler. She clicked her tongue. "I don't know what you look like, Dad, really I don't." He put up a hand to drag the muffler savagely askew again and she peeped under his arm to say to Bartrop "He's hungry, see? Comes home hungry after his day's work." She strained up again and banged his cap rakishly over one eye. "It's really my boy Fred's, see, only what with him being called up for the Army, and no garage and all this fog and damp, I said to Dad—didn't I, Dad?—I said—"

"Oh, dear, oh, dear," growled Bartrop. He had taken the starting-handle from Mr. Jutterby and placed it in position with a series of tinny raspings. "You say the engine's been rebored?" This had been a part of the tempting information on the postcard advertisement.

"Got the bill in the house, not paid yet," said Mrs. Jutterby, accompanying me anxiously to the front of the car.

She added in a small explosion of frankness: "I mean if they told us a lie, then I'm telling you one, I mean."

Bartrop was leaning mistrustfully on the handle with a delicate pressure, his ear cocked like a safe-breaker listening for a combination.

"Sure it wasn't just new rings?"

I said defensively that I didn't suppose a reputable garage would—

"Not a reputable one," said Bartrop, straightening his back with a groan.

"And all the brakes was bled, wasn't they, Dad?"

Mr. Jutterby stirred. "I'll bleed you," he said.

"And the lights are fine," I said.

"Very good lights," said Mrs. Jutterby, skipping round to the driver's seat and switching on a single pale head-lamp. "And this is what they call the choke," she said to me, confidentially but with enough volume to reach the ear of the man who mattered. "And then Dad fixed this up himself, for lighting up the dash-tray."

"The—?"

"The speedo and that," said Mrs. Jutterby confidently, and depressed the switch of a domestic wall-fitting, in brass, which had been attached to the instrument-panel. It caused a weak flood of light to illuminate Mrs. Jutterby's feet, while a faint and useless glow hovered behind the various clock faces.

"Now we'll have the wheels jacked up," said Bartrop's voice, and I made way for Mrs. Jutterby as she sprang out of the car crying, "Under the front, all the tools." Together, she and I, we managed to dislodge the near-side bonnet flap and by the light of Bartrop's monster torch slid back the tool-box top. Inside lay an odd miscellany comprising a broken plug, a screwdriver and a dog's imitation bone in oil-stained rubber.

"That's the engine," said Mrs. Jutterby with presence of mind, deflecting the torch-light with an adroit nudge.

"Where's the jack," said Bartrop rudely.

"With the carburator and everything." She slammed down the bonnet quickly. "And the jack'll be in the back."

"Perhaps your husband—?" said Bartrop.

"Dad!"

"One wheel at a time," said Bartrop.

As Mr. Jutterby jacked up the front wheels, one at a time, and then the back wheels, one at a time, he maintained a muffled commentary, for the most part unintelligible, but with periodic lucid patches after Bartrop's

more baldly defamatory pronouncements. His wife fluttered an anxious little commentary of her own, designed to excuse Mr. Jutterby for being hungry, her boy Fred for being at Aldershot, the garage for telling her any of the lies she might have told Bartrop, and myself for feeling uncomfortable at Bartrop's captiousness in walking round the car, kicking it, and shaking his head.

"He's hungry," she said again, as Mr. Jutterby looked out from under the offside running-board and asked what the hell sort of a game Bartrop thought he was playing.

"And now perhaps you'll run the engine," Bartrop said.

Mr. Jutterby crawled out and threw the jack on the pavement in a positive paroxysm of hunger.

"Look, mister—" he began, grinding his teeth.

"Dad, your cap," said Mrs. Jutterby.

"It won't start," I said. I could see that the time had come for me to take a firm stand. Bartrop leered brutally in the upward light of his torch.

"What!"

I explained that the engine usually started at a touch. ("Fifty times out of fifty," said Mrs. Jutterby.) Mrs. Jutterby's boy Fred, who was unfortunately at Aldershot, having been most unfairly called up for the Army after serving in the Merchant Navy, had only to sit in the seat ("That's all, just sit in the seat," echoed Mrs. Jutterby in support) and the engine sprang into pulsing life. It was a Good Goer, all the windows would wind, the brakes had been bled and the carburetor was perfect, but owing to its having stood in the open for three weeks in the damp and fog it was cold. The engine, I concluded defiantly, wouldn't run.

"Dad," said Mrs. Jutterby, "would start her in a shake, only he comes home hungry after a day's work—don't you, Dad?" But the bang of a door in the surrounding gloom was the only answer. Mr. Jutterby had gone in.

"Do you think," I said, "that you could get her going to-morrow?"

Mrs. Jutterby laughed and untied her tippet gaily from the steering-column. "Going? Why, ordinarily, she starts at a touch. Any time to-morrow, you come round, Dad'll have her going, mark my words." A shadow flickered across her face. "Your friend says some of the wheels is wonky."

"Never mind," I said.

"And there's two smooth tyres."

"You can always get tyres."

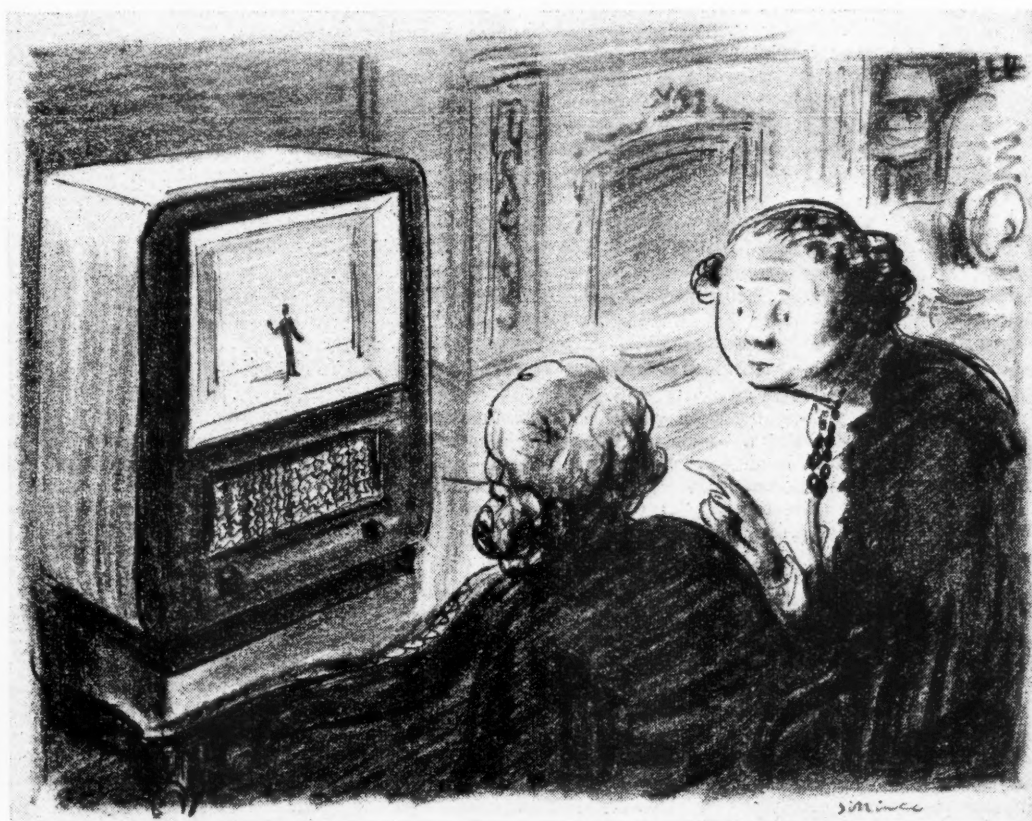
"And the hand-brake. It's—"

"Only needs a little adjustment," I said comfortably. "Don't you worry, Mrs. Jutterby. I've taken a fancy to it." I said it loudly, so that Bartrop should hear. He made no comment, and a sudden impulse to wound him made me add, almost in a shout:

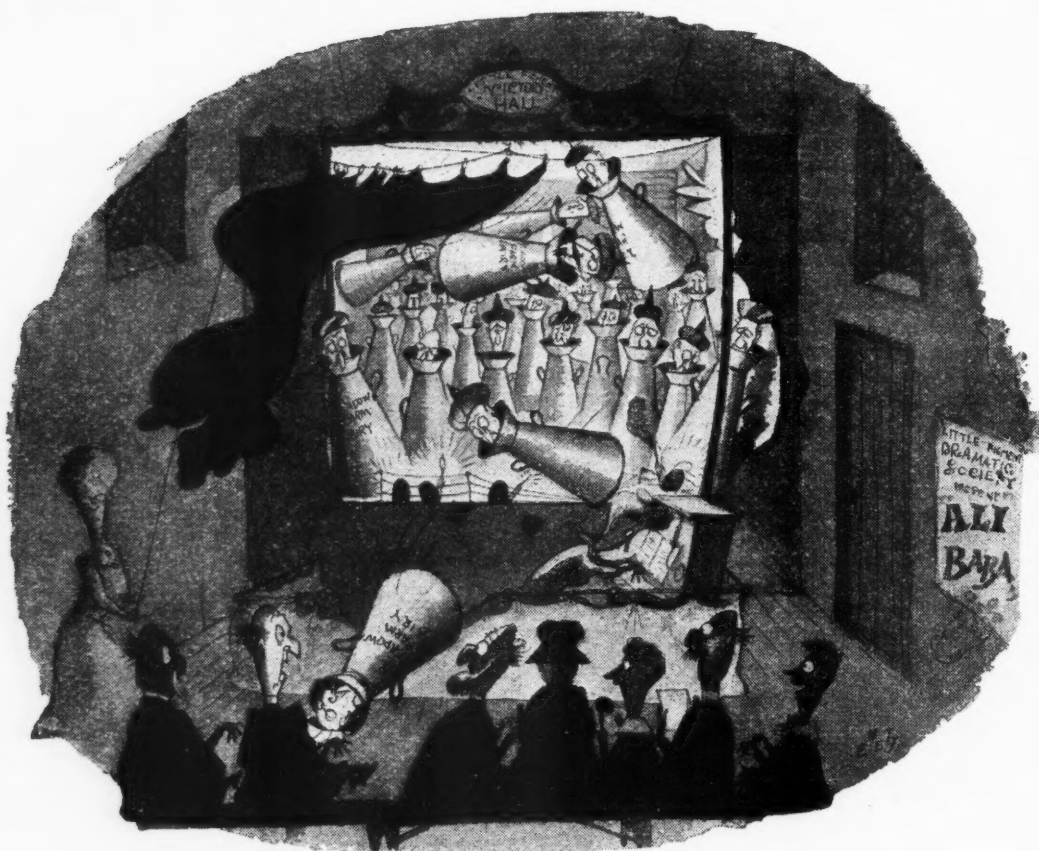
"I'm going to take your Good Goer, Mrs. Jutterby."

I glared challengingly around me in the murk, but still Bartrop made no answer. I then realized that the big bully had gone.

(To be regretted) J. B. B.



"Of course in real life he's over six feet tall."



*"I can't help feeling it would be better if they had let us tamper with the script and have, say, twenty-five thieves."*

### **"Bread I Dip in the River."**

**L**ET your affairs," wrote Thoreau, "be as two or three, not a hundred or a thousand." Soon after reading these words I found myself telling the managing director of my firm that I wished to resign my position.

"My life has become too complex, too artificial," I said. "I wish to exchange it for a life of greater simplicity and greater freedom. Let the lave go by me, if you see what I mean."

"This will be heavy news for Mr. Murgatroyd," he said moodily. "Only the other day he was telling me that he proposed to take you off the tuppence-halfpenny stamps and give you the threepennies. By heavens, man, who knows what denomination you might reach in a year or two!"

I replied that I had come to regard such triumphs as valueless.

"Have you ever seen a bubble," I asked, "blown from a child's pipe?"

"Certainly," he answered. "I myself as a lad—"

"As such a bubble," I said, "is commercial success to me."

"You mean," he said slowly, pushing his horn-rimmed glasses up on his forehead and giving me a searching look, "that just as the bubble, though ever larger and more glittering, must in the end come to nothing, so the prizes of the business world will lose their savour?"

"Exactly," I replied.

"Excellent!" he cried, throwing himself back in his chair and striking his desk a resounding blow. "I see it clearly!"

At first I thought of taking my car with me into my new life, but as it was very old I decided that it would be likely to increase my affairs beyond the two or three recommended by Thoreau. Then I wanted to preserve the nomadic traditions, and felt that I would be more in character striding across a lonely heath, shouting some wild song, than driving along an arterial road.

When I finally set off I carried an oil stove, a small tent, some cooking utensils, food and drink, and a sleeping-bag. I had decided to travel by train to a wild and solitary part of the country. My days would be spent on the open road and my nights under the stars. "Bread," I said to myself exultantly, fingering my B.U.s, "I dip in the river!"



Having sold my house, I anticipated no money troubles for the rest of my life. I expected to employ myself in studying Nature, to which I had so far been able to give little attention, and perhaps in doing occasional work for the farmers—collecting swarms of bees, rat-catching, lifting turnip-crops and the like. That my brain might not stagnate, I resolved to throw myself into the study of Bimetallism, and carried with me a pocket volume on the subject.

It was late afternoon when I arrived at my destination. I made a few purchases at the local shop and asked the shopkeeper the way to the nearest river. He appeared somewhat startled and after directing me he leant across the counter and whispered "Do nothing hastily." I could make nothing of this, and was even more bewildered when he shouted after me: "Leave your coupons out, anyway." I could only conclude that the whirl of commercial life had unsettled his reason. "Had his affairs been as two or three," I reflected, shifting my tent from one shoulder to the other, "this would not have happened."

When I reached the river, darkness had fallen, and I lost no time in pitching my tent. I had some vague idea of knocking over a rabbit and cooking it for supper, but after peering about in the undergrowth for some time, flashing my electric torch, I decided to abandon the project.

Rain was falling steadily when I looked out of my tent in the morning. Nevertheless, I felt a freedom from petty care as I washed and shaved by the riverside. The stream was in spate, and very muddy, so I dipped no bread in it, but made some toast on my stove.

Afterwards I set out to explore, hoping to see some curious manifestation of Nature—a stag at bay, a quaintly marked rat or some such thing. To my surprise, nothing at all seemed to be going on, and eventually I decided to shelter under a thick tree, thinking that this would be a suitable occasion to look into my work on Bimetallism. The opening paragraphs, written with rare fire, moved me profoundly, and I must admit that for a moment the landscape was blurred by something more than the rain. Unfortunately the quality was not maintained, and I was soon reading, with a sense of revulsion, a coarse and brutal outburst about clipped coinage. After turning a few more pages I closed the book and rose to my feet. "My affairs are as two or three," I said to myself, "but they are in a bad way."

However, the rain was moderating,

and I walked on doggedly, leaving the wood and entering a field where a farmer was ploughing.

"Want a bit o' seed scattering?" I called cheerily, trying to assume a rustic accent.

He paused in his work and eyed me sternly.

"When Jovial Muck Murdoch farmed this land last year," he said finally, "he lost four hundred pound."

"Tut-tut," I said.

"When I come here," he continued, "I blasted a hundred oaks out of Dead Man's Spinney. I turned Poison Patch over to Old Man's Hat, and I threw two hundred head of cattle, shoulder to shoulder, on Harmless Ephraim's Little Piece. Mad Martha's acre I clapped under lettuce. What was the result?"

"A handsome profit," I suggested.

"A loss of four hundred pound," he said, and returned to his ploughing without more ado. It seemed a bad time to pester him with offers of assistance, so I left the field and returned to my tent, which I found to be leaking.

"My affairs are as two or three," I reflected, "but they are the wrong ones. I will seek simplicity, but in the town, and let the lave, as it were, go by me."

o o

## Competition

**R**UTH  
Had a tooth  
That was troubling her rather  
a lot.

Joan  
Had a bone  
That stuck sideways and couldn't  
be got.

Jane  
Had a pain  
From remaining too long on her head.

Jill  
Had a chill  
And a jigsaw and jelly in bed.

Jean  
Had a scene  
After leaving her snow in the hall.  
But I  
Have a sty  
You can see, so I've beaten them all.

o o

## Those Were the Days.

"Expert cyclists are being employed in Paris to overtake and stop autocars found travelling at a dangerous speed."

From a "Christian Age" of 1898.



Here is John Hannibal Jones, sbrewd man of business, conducting his correspondence—



Here is John Hannibal Jones, famous ex-forward, exhorting all and sundry to "use your feet, can't you?"—



Here is John Hannibal Jones, expert bridge player, commenting on his partner's lead—



But never mind—here is John Hannibal Jones, very inferior kitchen help, washing up.

## At the Play

### "SMITH IN ARCADY" (EMBASSY)

THE theatre abounds just now with ideological clashes. Mr. N. C. HUNTER's comedy shows the best sort of old landowner faced by the irruption into his village of a Government-sponsored social centre housed in a prawn-pink bungalow and staffed by earnest and terrible legionaries from the Ministry of This and That. The old gentleman and his reactions are rather well drawn, except perhaps when he bumbles in his cups about being an aristocrat, and Mr. KYNASTON REEVES is perfectly cast for the job; and the villagers, properly allergic to talk of culture by urban blackbeetles unable to distinguish between the two ends of a cow, ring fairly true. It is with the beetles that Mr. HUNTER goes adrift, missing a promising target by the breadth of his caricature and by his indecision as to whether he is writing comedy or farce. The village and their beloved *Colonel* are wholly the one, the creatures from the Ministry wholly the other, while perched between the two are *Miss Parsloe*, the county organizer, and the *Colonel's* naval son, a young man lucky to have risen to the rank of Commander on cerebral equipment which nowadays would have under-powered a partially able seaman. (Their whirlwind romance is nearly the most unlikely I have seen on any stage, and that is saying much.) The social centre, built in a month (good going for 1946), was sited in the middle of the village cricket pitch, and this is another instance of how Mr. HUNTER spreads his jam too thick. Naturally the thing goes up in flames, and, there being a number of claimants for the honour of its destruction, the author brings down the curtain on a most ingenious twist. About half an hour too late, however. Much, in particular a carousal which even an entire decanter of Cockburn fails to enliven, wants cutting; but if he saw to this and could bring his prodders and planners within recognizable bounds he would have a marketable comedy, for he has a ripe

subject and no lack of humour. Mr. REEVES is excellent. Mr. MILTON ROSMER gives an amusing sketch of an Irish G.P., and Mr. CHARLES LLOYD PACK, leading the Whitehall harriers, makes so much of the part that one wishes he could be allowed to make more.

One very good point emerges, and that is that cursing—by which I mean loamy, fully-fashioned, Old Testament, Cold-Comfort-Farm, lightning-cum-earthquake cursing—is in danger of joining the other lost arts of the countryside. If progress kills that too then one of the oldest and most



LIGHT COMES TO SUNBURY.

Smith . . . . . Mr. CHARLES LLOYD PACK  
Miss Yearpley . . . . . Miss ROSAMUND GREENWOOD  
Col. Sir Geoffrey Chater, K.C.B. . . Mr. KYNASTON REEVES

picturesque of our rural amenities is gone.

### "CAVIAR TO THE GENERAL" (NEW LINDSEY)

More ideology. Which side has the last word in this comedy of American-Soviet trade negotiation is a little hard to decide, but I think Moscow has it. Easy, you may say, in theory, to sit toughly at a conference-table out playing a mere general from the strength of a well-stacked brief-case; but it is quite different when your hero of the Soviet Union proves a sophisticated woman intent on wrestling the formula of atomic energy from your pocket (where, incidentally, it has no right to be) by every device of sex,

vodka and emancipated chicanery. For such a contest Harvard and a wad of family debentures are but an insecure foundation, and so it turns out; *General Tanya* is more than a match for clean, decent, hard-hitting Mr. *Allison*. She falls in love with him, it is true, but she has the gift, rare at any rate on this side of the Dnieper, of turning her passions to strictly national account. When he rattles her by signing her initial proposals, so outrageous that no Government, however uninhibited, dare back them, she melts him easily with firewater and tenderness. And when, once more in conference and with what must surely have been a considerable hangover, he shows symptoms of reviving resilience, a measure of generosity, very loosely-phrased, puts him again in line. With most of these tactics the world is already well acquainted. Here they are moderately entertaining. Up to a point the play, which has had a run in the States, is quite well made. Mr. GEORGE S. GEORGE has wit and the knack of getting the most from his minor characters. Of his plausibility it is not fair to complain, for his subject entitles him to a free fancy; where he tails off is in the motivation of his main scenes. In the sparing of his magnate and his tigress-in-uniform he has a good situation, but its force is spent before the end; it is a good piece of mechanism which needs more winding up. This fault is exaggerated by the deliberate slowness with which Miss EUGÉNIE

LEONTOVICH plays *Tanya*; she endows her with plenty of husky charm, but in the process we are kept waiting. Opposite her Mr. JOHN McLAREN is a pleasant representative of base plutocracy. Miss RUTH LODGE does all that can be done for the unyielding part of *Allison's* Fifth-Avenue-Communist sister, and as his go-getting adjutant Mr. BONAR COLLEANO, JR. is armed to the teeth with wisecracks which he lets fall with unerring aim. ERIC.

"Straying on Moorpark, Sandhead, one B.F. Lamb."

Notice in Galloway "Advertiser."  
Lost by that ass of a shepherd.

## Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

## Dr. Beneš

THIS study of *Dr. Beneš* (HARRAP, 21/-) was inspired by a number of talks between Dr. Beneš and Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE in the spring and summer of 1944. It was written immediately afterwards, and as it ends with the return of Dr. Beneš to Prague in 1945 it does not deal with the problems which have been occupying him since that date. It seems, however, that Mr. MACKENZIE takes a cheerful view of the present relations between Russia and Czechoslovakia, for he tells us that Dr. Beneš has "a shrewd admiration and, as I surmise, a warm affection" for Stalin. "They are both of peasant stock, and this reassures Mr. MACKENZIE, who pictures them as two countrymen on either side of a fire discussing a deal in corn or cattle and chaffing each other as camouflage for the mutual respect they feel for one another as sharp men of business. As may be inferred from this cosy glimpse of high politics on the other side of the iron curtain, this book has all the merits and defects of an enthusiastically partisan document. It opens with the villain of the piece, Hitler, screaming at a Nuremberg rally in September 1938—"Now two men stand arrayed against one another: there is Herr Beneš, and here stand I . . . With regard to the Sudeten Germans my patience is now at an end!" To Hitler the Czechoslovak Republic was an artificial product of the Versailles Treaty, with no historical justification. Mr. MACKENZIE naturally argues in its favour, as a unit disrupted a thousand years ago by an incursion of Magyars, who cut off Slovakia from the Czechs and held it as a portion of the Hungarian kingdom until the Treaty of Versailles; and he compares the Sudeten Germans at the other end of the country to the Scots planted in Ulster. This is an apt parallel; but his refusal to admit that the Hungarians, dispossessed after a thousand years, have any grounds for resentment is symptomatic of his general intolerance of the other man's standpoint. From this historical argument he passes to Dr. Beneš and the most vivid and delightful portion of his book—the account of his hero's boyhood and youth. To help the Czech revival was from the first his sole aim, and to equip himself for his task he decided to study books and life from twenty to forty-five and then enter politics, armed at all points. As a poor student in Paris he supported himself precariously by journalism, acquiring from his associates—Russian revolutionaries, French syndicalists, anti-clericals and anti-militarists—and from his study of Zola a predominantly materialistic outlook,

which later experience and reflection led him to reject. It was, he told Mr. MACKENZIE, in England, which he visited from Paris, that his agnosticism was disturbed, and when he went back to Paris he felt he had left a people with a religious conception of life for one with a purely secular conception. The brutal materialism of Fascism and Nazism, and all the other symptoms of a sick world between the two wars, gradually convinced him that democracy is inadequate unless it is inspired by faith in the spiritual destiny of the individual. The pages in which he discusses the development of his present attitude are of very considerable interest; and one can but hope that his dream of contributing to the reconciliation of the East and the West by making Prague what Mr. MACKENZIE calls "a kind of mutual intellectual centre" will be realized.

H. K.





### The Farmer's Round

In the bad old days of free enterprise a shepherd boy, brought up on the parish, became the owner of three downland farms. His children were farming five when *Round Roundbarrow Farm* (JENKINS, 12/6) opens; and their past fortunes have already been told by the eldest son, "EDWIN MOULD" of *The Field*. His diary, which appeared in the same weekly, takes you from one bout of turkey-plucking and influenza to another: all the seasons being depicted with the same observant eye on their ups and downs. The writer's post-war plan for the farm was "to return to the old policy, frowned upon in war-time, of selling our goods straight to the consumer . . . as far as it is possible." Barter, too, had its points. "We could almost live by barter . . . indeed, I think we could quite." But the farm's best piece of social service—the seventy-year-old father's milk-round, with its additional largesse of rabbits and green-stuff—was strangled by red tape; and no one, for fear of a similar garroting, would take it on as a gift. That the book is far more concerned with the joys than the sorrows of farming seems due to the fact that the author could look beyond 1944 without seeing what was upon him.

H. P. E.

### Traveller by Moonlight

With gentle and impressive dignity, Mr. WALTER DE LA MARE is making ready for the end of his long poetic journey. In his last book, *The Burning Glass*, he spoke of this only too clearly. He has always, since the earliest Georgian days, been the poet of pure beauty, but he has also been terribly aware of the things which may lie in wait just round the corner. "Who's there?" he asks, and in answer "came company, not my own." And as a traveller (to this image he comes back again and again) he has been mocked by voices and odd echoes, by a vast silence and loneliness, or worse still, by nothingness. His latest poem has for its title simply *The Traveller* (FABER, 7/6). In it a man and his white Arab horse—perhaps the soul and the body—are picking their way across a nightmare desert, full of craters



"Maybe it was the whale we had for lunch, Doctor."

and precipices and dreaming levels of midnight blue. But when at last they stagger to their death, parched, half-crazy, the dreadful pilgrimage has not been in vain. For the traveller is in company with all those others, "venturers, voyagers, dreamers, seers," who are dear to the heart of the Angel of Failure. It is the end:

"And then the night-tide of the all-welcoming grave  
For those who weary, and a respite crave,  
Inn at the cross-roads, and the traveller's rest . . ."

That inn at the cross-roads! We have approached it often in the poems of WALTER DE LA MARE. And even these few lines are enough to show that the old magic is unchanged. "And all his lovely things even lovelier grow." He is one of the great poets of the century and that will be his immortality.

P. M. F.

### George Sand

Although too diffuse, Miss FRANCES WINWAR's account of George Sand and her times in *The Life of the Heart* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 12/6) is perceptive and entertaining, the author's feminine insight repeatedly redressing the balance when her heart is inclining her to excessive sympathy with her heroine. Directly descended from Augustus the Strong of Saxony, a distinction she shared with a good many other persons, and the daughter of a beautiful girl who was a camp-follower in the armies of Napoleon, George Sand was predestined to a troubled existence. Miss WINWAR gives an excellent account of her married life, which broke down when her husband, who had with a considerable effort reconciled himself to her platonic love for one young man, learnt that she was about to bear a child to another. Perhaps because her own mother had not given her the tenderness she needed, George Sand had an excessively over-developed maternal instinct, which extended far beyond her own children, usually coming to rest on some attractive member of the opposite sex. Her journey to Venice with Alfred de Musset, the most famous episode in her life, is very well told by Miss WINWAR. But the later and, though less dramatic, equally interesting relationship with Chopin is less skilfully presented, partly perhaps because Miss WINWAR was beginning to flag under the burden of her heroine's temperament, and partly because the strain of callousness in George Sand came out in this affair, and this is an aspect of George Sand on which the author is reluctant to dwell.

H. K.

### A Mild Melodrama

Mr. GEORGE MILLAR devotes his first novel to the goings-on in a remote Austrian valley in the first weeks of American occupation. The valley is full of "toughs" of one sort or another—Hitler's friend in hiding with his family and dreadfully afraid for his pretty young daughters, a French slave-worker (a student with him in Paris once) who likes the valley too much to go home, an innkeeper whose dead lady lies in pickle in the lake and whose live son has returned from the war with contemptible new ideas, a nest of escaped S.S. men and their still more fanatical women supporters, and a stray journalist or two. Nevertheless, *My Past Was an Evil River* (HEINEMANN, 9/6) turns out to be rather a quiet affair. Everything is always simmering, but the watched pot is slow in bubbling and does not boil over till the end of the book. Here a kidnapping by the S.S. men and a fight in the mountains provide some real excitement. Mr. MILLAR is handicapped by the notion that a modern adventure story should be well weighted with "psychology," whereas this only holds

up the action without telling the reader much more about human nature. Where Mr. MILLAR does succeed, and notably succeed, is in an inset piece—a yarn that might have come from a modern Arabian Nights of the sailor and the very clever lady who played backgammon up and down France for the lady's hand, and what became of them both.

J. S.

### Science and Seamanship

The British Navies in the *Second World War* (LONGMANS, 21/-), by Admiral Sir W. M. JAMES, G.C.B., is a most excellent book. "Never before," so he says towards the end of it, "has the British sailor been so highly tested, and never before has he come through the test of war with such a glowing record, though eighty-five per cent. of the officers and two-thirds of the men serving afloat in 1944 were experiencing naval life for the first time." Responsibility was added by the complicity of weapons, for if an able seaman failed in his swift duty, an anti-aircraft system of control costing £100,000 might be made useless. Strain, too, was accentuated, since there could be no relaxation even in harbour by day or by night. He shows how this realization by all crews that they were in one potential coffin together, how the endurance of the civilian population, the magnificent co-operation of the R.A.F. and the use (as in Pitt's time) of Army and Navy as "blade and hilt of one weapon" won us the war—just won us the war. In an explanatory note, he tells us that his account of the great maritime war is based on White Papers, M.O.I. publications, American war reports and many other sources. He has correlated this mass into a straightforward and readable history, but his skill as a writer induces those who made it to remain, quickened by gratitude, in our minds for ever. There is no space here to list the chapter headings, and in any case the book should be read and not skimmed. The many clear diagrams of operations add to understanding of the text.

B. E. B.

### Browsing and Sluicing

The only adequate title, surely, for this review, and we are encouraged to borrow it by the inclusion of two juicy filets from Mr. P. G. Wodehouse in Miss MADGE HART's sustaining anthology, *Eating and Drinking* (SAMPSON LOW, 15/-). Since it seems at the moment as if we may never eat or drink decently again, the common reader, shrunken and debilitated, may well fear lest such a feast of Tantalus as Miss HART provides from the groaning tables of literature may not prove too much. He can embark on it confidently, however; for her bill of fare, though extraordinarily rich in places, has been chosen with enviable discretion to balance sweet with sour and fat with lean. There is Jorrock at breakfast and the capacious Dr. Fordyce, reported in "The Epicure's Almanack" as staying his hunger but once a day on a *bonne bouche* of chicken, a pound and a half of rump steak, a tankard of strong ale, a bottle of port and a quarter pint of brandy (after which his lectures on chemistry never failed to carry weight); Virginia Woolf's exquisite description of a College banquet and her lacerating account of dinner at an English hotel; Cobbett's raging thrift and Boswell's immortal paragraph on muffins; Rabelais and Dickens, Saintsbury and Sir John Mandeville, Richard Llewellyn (on the proper preparation of potch) and Walton, Brillat-Savarin and Pope. There may be rather a surfeit of *friandises* from Christina Rossetti, and too much poached from Byron, and of course Miss HART should never have omitted—but no, we must be content with so catholic a choice of dishes, served so discerningly

in courses such as Good Eating, Eating Little or Nothing, and Eating Outside. Miss ROSEMARY BROWN contributes some highly edible woodcuts. Thwarted gastronomes, here is a little comfort! And no house charge. E. O. D. K.

### Voyage for Landsmen

To open Mr. H. M. TOMLINSON's new novel is to leave common fiction behind: this is distinguished writing. The reader of *Morning Light* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 9/6) enjoys the rare feeling of well-being that comes with confidence in an author. The words he reads are sparse and firm. They seem quite new, and they make pictures, those pictures of sea and sky and weather in which landsmen (particularly) delight. The book starts as every sea-story should—with a boy running away from home—and it follows his adventures in London and on the Atlantic in a rather desultory way until it leaves him, the confirmed sailor, off on a voyage to the Crimea and war. There are events enough in the book, since it deals with the hungry forties (the 1840s), with new ideas threatening trouble at home and the tide of emigration setting towards America and the new goldfields. What may trouble the reader is Mr. TOMLINSON's sliding scale and shifting interest. Half the book is given over to the first weeks of David's escapade, with sketches of port and city and of Aunt Ruth and Captain Killick, both of them persons of uncommon integrity. Then David slips into the background, the author picks up another and yet another, and time begins to race and events to telescope. No book could be expected to survive such treatment, but the separate parts retain their charm and interest. It is a novel best read in the spirit in which the fortunate set out on a long voyage—in no hurry to reach harbour, but taking each day, seascape and port of call as it comes.

J. S.

Two books of special interest to Guardsmen and their relatives have recently been published. *Welsh Guards at War* (GALE AND POLDEN, 25/-), by Major L. F. ELLIS, tells the illustrious story of the Welsh Guards during the second world war—in France, North Africa, Italy and Germany. There are a number of excellent illustrations in line and colour. *6th Guards Tank Brigade* (SAMPSON LOW, 21/-), by PATRICK FORBES, traces the career of the Brigade—with its Grenadier, Coldstream and Scots Guardsmen—across North-West Europe, from Arramanches to Kiel. The many maps and photographs are particularly good.





*"Do you mind having bake again, dear?"*

### *Advice to a Young Man*

**I**F any young man were to come to me and ask my advice on the matter of buying a secondhand bicycle, the advice I should give him would be to have a good look at the bicycle the moment he had bought it and try to get it off by heart.

This, unfortunately, was a thing I neglected to do. Flushed with the pride of possession, I rode my mount out of the shop without running over its points. I had bought a pair of new (not secondhand) trouser-clips at the same time, and perhaps I was rather preoccupied with these. They were the superior type that are coated with celluloid, and I was used only to plain steel clips. But this is the merest excuse.

I propped my bicycle up against the kerb in the High Street, using the nearside pedal for the purpose. I always prop my bicycle up in this manner when there is no lamp-post handy. I then went off to do some shopping. My shopping took me just forty minutes, and included fish, onions, mushrooms, a pint of bitter, no offal, and a book exchanged at the library.

When I had finished I had lost my bicycle.

Doubtless it was still there. But there were so many other bicycles as well. All bicycles look the same once they have been ridden. The bicycles in the High Street looked most particularly the same. The kerb was lined with them. I had not the remotest idea which particular stretch of kerb I had left mine propped against.

I walked up and down studying all the bicycles narrowly. It was, I think, the first time I had ever regarded bicycles so closely. It gave me a dislike for bicycles in the mass that I had hitherto reserved for hens, brass-hats and amateur actors. My own bicycle remained incognito.

I patrolled the western side of the High Street seven times in all, by which time I knew intimately every bicycle present. As long as I live I shall be able to recognize any one of those bicycles, wherever I may meet it. After deep thought I concluded I would rely on my ear. It is, I agree, difficult to tell a bicycle by ear, especially if you cannot tell it by eye,

but my ear is the sort of ear that is susceptible to music.

Once I have heard, for example, a tuning-fork, I remember its characteristic note, and I have often surprised people years after by meeting them and at once singing the note of their tuning-fork. This comes, I suppose, of having been brought up among tuning-forks. My grandfather, who was a doctor, and very musical, owned a quantity of tuning-forks, and carried them about with him everywhere in his little black bag. This was not really a good idea, as occasionally he brought out a tuning-fork instead of his stethoscope, when he would strike his patient a ringing blow with it on the chest and tell him to say "ninety-nine." This was easy enough if he happened to have fished out a tuning-fork of moderate pitch, but some of them were very high up the scale indeed, owing to his habit of singing alto, and men with deep chests were unable to fit a "ninety-nine" to them, which used to annoy my grandfather very much. He said they were just shamming sick.



I had rung my bicycle-bell considerably during the short time it had been in my possession, and I believed I should recognize its note. Accordingly, I strode smartly up the street, ringing the bell of every bicycle as I passed it.

The effect was musical in the extreme, and at a time of less pre-occupation it would have afforded me the utmost pleasure. The High Street resounded to the carillon, and many shop-keepers rushed to their doors under the impression there was a fire. However, the experiment was not wholly successful, because the only bell I could have sworn to be mine was attached to a lady's bicycle with a baby's sidecar, and I was reasonably certain that this was not the kind of bicycle I had purchased. (It was not until much later that it occurred to me that the owner of the outfit might have stolen my bell to amuse her child, substituting her own bell on my handlebar to conceal the theft.)

My only course now was to wait for all the other bicycles to go away, and claim the one left over.

It is very surprising indeed how long it is necessary to wait before a street is cleared of bicycles. One or two were certainly removed, but they were at once replaced by others highly similar, and as I neglected to make a note of the vacancies as they occurred owing to having used my pencil to stir a broken bottle of furniture-cream, I was no farther forward. I got extremely tired after a while, and I sat down to rest on one of the few areas of kerbstone unoccupied by a bicycle. A policeman who passed did not care for this very much. He said:

"What d'you think you're doing?"

I said I was waiting for my bicycle. He suggested that perhaps my chauffeur was having trouble starting it. I explained the situation to him more thoroughly. He said:

"Well, which way was she pointing?"

This was helpful. I brought out a large-scale street-map of the town, pin-pointed the shop at which I had bought my bicycle, and traced my course. We settled that I must have left the machine pointing to the east or Public Library end of the High Street. This allowed us to dismiss about half the bicycles present—or slightly more than half, of course, including the one with the baby's sidecar attached, which, by a coincidence, was also pointing to the east. Acting on the proposal of this really most intelligent policeman, we further eliminated all lady's models. I had a mere dozen or so bicycles left to choose from.



*"Have all your tickets, excess fares and feeble excuses ready, please."*

"Got your trouser-clips with you?" asked the policeman next.

I had them in my breast-pocket. As I have already mentioned, they were new. So we then crossed off all bicycles that had trouser-clips clipped to the handlebars.

"Leaves five in all," said the policeman. "What else can we work on?"

I had a flash of brightness myself. I said that I had bought a new lamp to go with the bicycle. We tried all the lamps on the remaining bicycles, and only three worked. We had reduced the field to three.

After that, we were both stumped for some minutes. All this time—it was the lunch-hour—people were taking bicycles away from the kerb, but only bicycles we had already rejected. There was no helpfulness in the removal of these bicycles.

We looked at the three bicycles long and carefully. They all looked pretty much the same. But I knew I hadn't bought three bicycles. Suddenly, the policeman gave an exclamation, and removed one of them. It was his own.

It was a straight fight between two models.

But our pooled resources were exhausted. I do not suppose I should ever have found my bicycle if we hadn't been joined by a man wearing trouser-clips.

"Scuse me," he said. "I've wasted half an hour trying to remember which of these bikes is the one I borrowed. Which is yours?"

We tossed for it, the policeman supplying the coin, and the man with the trouser-clips chose the one that didn't want pumping-up. Since then I have kept my bicycle safely at home.

## Suits

I WISH the newspapers would stop printing totally unfounded rumours that clothes rationing is soon to end. While in some directions the present Government is no doubt open to criticism, I personally feel that they have done a fine job in making it so easy for men not to buy clothes. They have enabled me to fulfil a life-long ambition and become at last a one-suit man.

When I was demobilized a year ago Edith took an early opportunity of breaking to me what she evidently thought was a bit of extremely bad news.

"Prepare yourself for a shock," she said. "All your civilian clothes were destroyed, apparently, when the furniture warehouse was damaged in the blitz. There is just a bare possibility that they will turn up, because when all the goods were transferred to another warehouse there was a certain amount of confusion, and things were wrongly labelled. So do not give up hope."

Of course I pretended to be terribly upset, and even spoke about writing a stiff letter to *The Times* about the whole affair, but secretly I was delighted. Although temperamentally a one-suit man, I had by 1939 accumulated a considerable wardrobe. Edith used to suggest that I needed a new

suit long before the old one had developed a really satisfactory shine, and if I did not immediately buy one she would order one on her own initiative. In this way I acquired some abominable confections, including a plus-four suit in a mixture of purple, red, and green.

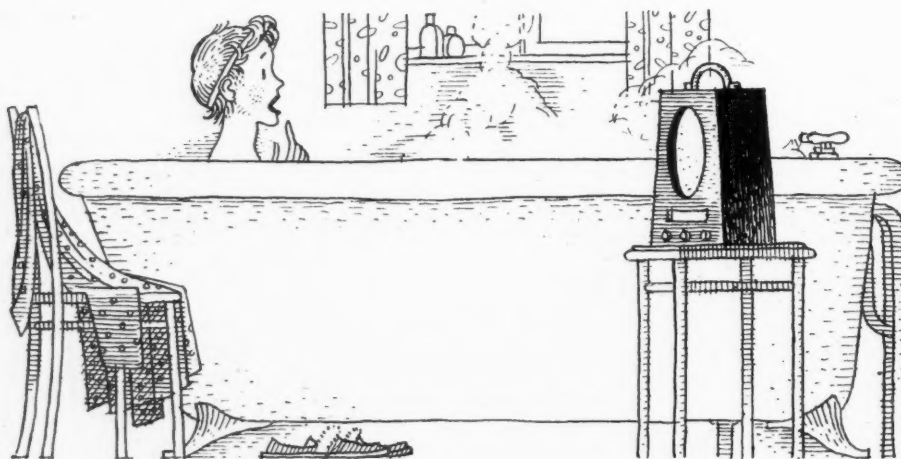
"It is very sad," I said dejectedly when Edith broke the news. "But I have my demob. suit, and plenty of coupons. By the way, I would be glad if you would look after the coupons for me. You know how careless I am with documents."

So I wore the demob. suit, and gradually Edith began to eat her way through the coupons. Starting with an odd one to add to some of her own in the purchase of some stockings, she went on to borrow three more, and then six. After that she had no more control over her appetite than has a hopeless drunkard over his thirst. Pre-breakfast resolutions to get through the day without tipping a single coupon were easy to make, but rarely kept.

When she confessed that they had all gone I did not chide her. I just looked a little melancholy and said that I would have to manage with my demob. suit. I am still managing with my demob. suit, and it is fast becoming all that a suit should be—shapeless,

shiny, and with permanent holes in the jacket pockets. A man has never known the true beauty of life until he has acquired large holes in his jacket pockets, communicating with the lining. They are a great convenience, and provide a permanent treasure-trove. You go out to buy cigarettes, and find you have left your money at home in a pile on the dressing-table, but you do not have to go back for it. By contorting yourself into the right shape to get your hand through the hole and round to the back you are certain to find at least one-and-twopence. On another occasion you wish to write something down. You have left your patent silver pencil at home, but you will be very unlucky if there is not a stub of ordinary pencil in your treasure-trove. And what can equal the joy of a smokeless man on a cold railway station at night, who manages by twisting himself into knots to discover in his lining no fewer than two and a half cigarettes, even if they are a little limp?

It is a glorious life, the life of a one-suit man. The only thing that worries me is the imminence of spring cleaning. Edith was out when the large box containing all my lost clothes arrived from the warehouse last May, and I hid them hurriedly in the attic. Perhaps it would be safer to bury them in the garden.



"We're now taking you over to the Albert Hall."

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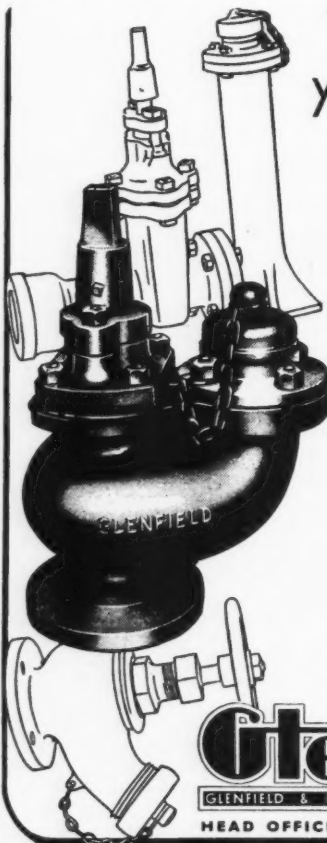
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## ASTORIAS

The  
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MAKERS OF MEAT AND FISH PASTES  
AT CHICHESTER SINCE 1750  
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From high-class confectioners, or by post, enclosing Personal Points card, which will be returned. 1lb. box 4/-, post free.

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## The Fame of Farrah's

For well over a century Farrah's has been the first choice for thousands of discriminating "sweet-tooths"

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ORIGINAL  
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*I have* **COLOUR** *from the Sunset*  
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"Sunset Magic is captured in the glorious hues of my Jester range. Follow my washing instructions and my soft, silky Jester Wools will 'Never Shrink from a Wash'."

To knit the Jumper shown here get Jester Publication No. 1004.

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*Jester for Gayer Garments*

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when **STEWES** and **GRAVIES**  
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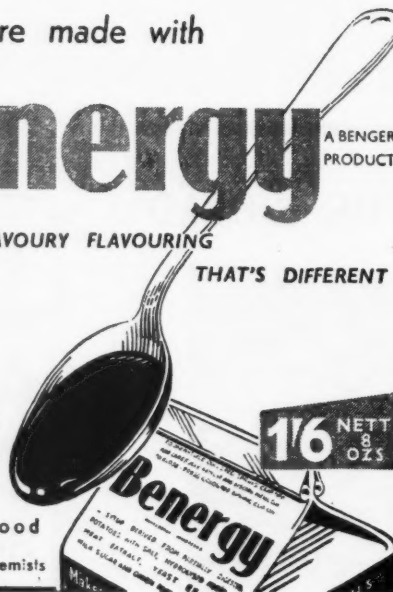
A BENER PRODUCT

THE NEW SAVOURY FLAVOURING

THAT'S DIFFERENT

GOOD!—It is made by the manufacturers of Benger's Food

From all Grocers & Chemists



1/6 NETT 8 OZS

**NEWMaid**

Self-generating  
**VACUUM CLEANER**



A limited number now available. Soon, it is hoped, you will have no difficulty in obtaining your favourite vacuum cleaner.

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ACHILLE SERRE  
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Quality Cleaning and  
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\***RETEX** Achille Serre's unique process for giving new sheen to silks and satins and firmness and resilience to woollens.

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FOR QUICKER SHAVES





# Less chance of colds in *this* family!

Mother's reinforcing them all (including Dad) with a course of Angier's. This palatable emulsion tones up the system and so increases resistance to colds, 'flu, bronchitis and 'tummy chills.' If one of them should fall a victim, it's less likely to spread to the others and Angier's will help the patient to 'throw it off' quickly, without the usual prolonged cough and with less risk of complications.



**BUILD UP THE FAMILY  
WITH A COURSE OF  
Angier's**

\* TOO YOUNG TO SUFFER \*

**My  
mummy  
did it**



*from an actual photograph*

What would you do? Should the mother have a second chance? Is it safe to leave the child for another week? N.S.P.C.C. inspectors often have difficult, worrying decisions to make, on which the whole future of a young life may depend. The National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children only prosecuted in 1,160 cases out of 41,720 investigated last year. It tries to rebuild family life wherever it possibly can.



PLEASE SEND SOMETHING TO THE

**N · S · P · C · C**

4 VICTORY HOUSE, LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON, W.C.2  
OR TO ANY LOCAL OFFICE \* Donations or legacies gratefully received

Dentures need more than mere washing; they should be sterilised too...

Better let

**MILTON  
DENTURE  
POWDER**

clean them

this  
way →



The filter tip that allows no bits of tobacco to enter the mouth is the extra refinement that adds to the enjoyment of smoking.



I never get tired of her smile.

*Familiarity breeds content, eh?*

Yes, I'm content. And so should she be with her looks and personality.

*With a capital 'P,' of course!*

★  
**Personality**  
★  
TURTLE OIL SOAP

More than a Soap — a Beauty Treatment

1/10 PER TABLET (2 RATIONS)

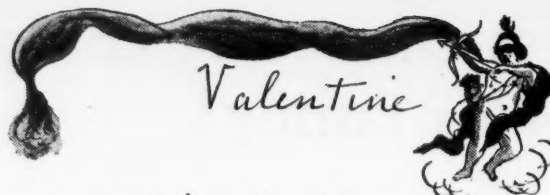
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Asprey buy articles of modern and Antique Jewellery, Gold and Silver, China and Glass, Leather Goods, Fitted Suit Cases, etc. Prevailing prices are at high level, and they strongly advise advantage being taken of existing conditions. They will be pleased to send a Representative where the quantity is too great to send by registered post or rail. Telephone enquiries Regent 6767, extension 40. Parcels should be addressed to, or deposited at:—

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a scarf in sentimental mood designed by

## Jacquar

16 Grosvenor Street, London, W.1.

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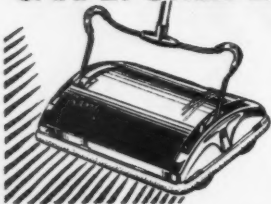
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Branksome Tower, Bournemouth

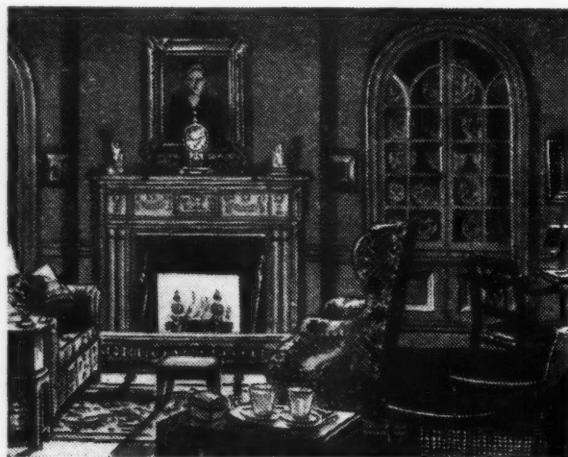
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We said we'd tell you  
when you could buy

## Ewbank CARPET SWEEPERS



We are now delivering a few, but please be patient with your retailer



### GENTLE INDULGENCE

When at last the day's work is done, you naturally feel you have earned a little pampering. You pull your favourite chair a few inches nearer the fire. You arrange a stool for your feet, a cushion for your head. You settle back. Ha! . . .

And as the evening wears on, your tired body calls for still further indulgence—a soothing glass of Horlicks. What a comfort it is! How pleasant to know that tonight you will sleep the deep, unbroken sleep you need so much, and tomorrow you will awake refreshed.

Horlicks is still not plentiful, but the shops are sharing out what they have as fairly as possible.

**HORLICKS**

## Tetley 1837 SENATOR

American Blend  
COFFEE

VACUUM PACKED  
IN 1-LB. TINS



JOSEPH TETLEY & CO., LTD.  
LONDON & NEW YORK

### EASILY THE BEST

since the days of the Victoria



## OSNATH

THE PRAM WITH THE FLOATING MOTION

The elite Baby Carriage since 1873. The demand is great but we are doing our best to make supplies available as quickly as possible.

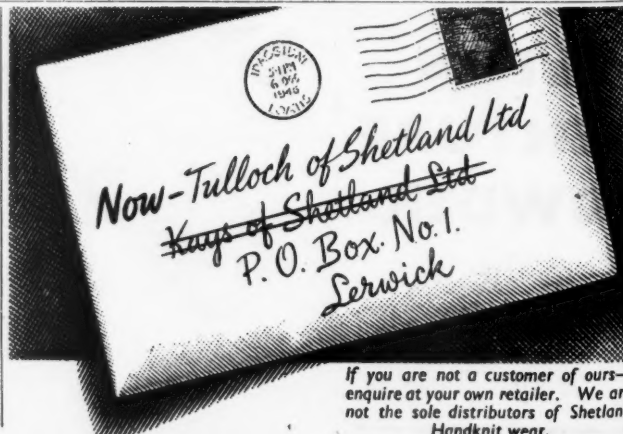
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1872-1947



JEFFY DYES DOLLY BLUE DOLLY CREAM



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The COVENTRY CLIMAX fork truck does all the heaving, lifting, and shifting, saving laborious and costly man-handling.



*lifting (saves LABOUR)* — The driver can lift her load up to a height of 14 ft. by the touch of a lever.

*carrying (saves TIME)* — Smooth safe travel at up to 12 m.p.h. forward or in reverse, indoors or out; on twin pneumatic tyres.



*stacking (saves SPACE)* — With the load shown the driver can turn and stack in an alley 10 ft. wide.

*easy to handle* — The three wheels give the stability of 3-point suspension on rough ground, and the twin pneumatic tyres prevent sinking into soft ground and safeguard floors indoors.

*Illustrated folder B1 on request*  
**COVENTRY CLIMAX**  
**fork trucks**

COVENTRY CLIMAX ENGINES LTD  
WIDDINGTON ROAD WORKS  
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*Artists in Silverplate since 1840*

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We hope you will be patient.  
The demand for our Silver-  
plate exceeds the supply,  
but we are doing our best.

ELKINGTON & COMPANY LIMITED, BIRMINGHAM



THIS IS

**FOUR SQUARE**

CUT CAKE 2 1/9 oz.

ONE OF THE SIX FOUR SQUARE  
BALANCED BLENDS



AN EXQUISITE THING

Those who are  
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finer shades of  
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**IMPERIAL LEATHER**

HAND FINISHED TOILET SOAPS



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'Take a shop,' said the Prince, and Mr. Marcovitch, who, a hundred years ago, was making his cigarettes in an obscure room near Piccadilly, knew that their excellence had made him famous. Ever since, Marcovitch Cigarettes have been made to the same high standards as won the approval of that Eminent Personage and his friends; they are rolled of the very finest tobacco, for the pleasure of those whose palates appreciate perfection.



*Marcovitch*  
**BLACK AND WHITE**  
*cigarettes for Virginia smokers*

Flat 15 for 2/3 - 25 for 3/9  
100 for 15/-

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**  
**SMOKING MIXTURE**  
*2 oz. tin 6/7*

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LTD.

*"Jolly good biscuits!"*



A meal makes the railway journey seem shorter. And Weston biscuits give a happy ending to the meal. Tempting and satisfying, made from the finest ingredients obtainable, they are a first-class food.

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